

Américas

JUNE 1958





Américas

Volume 10, Number 6, June 1958

published in English, Spanish, and Portuguese

CONTENTS

- 2 MAGIC FOR THE FARM Adolfo Solórzano Díaz
- 7 COMPOSED BY CORDERO Gilbert Chase
- 12 THEATER IN THE STREET Joaquín Gómez Bas
- 18 THE YEARS OF O'HIGGINS Enrique Bunster
- 23 RHYTHMIC COLOMBIANS Hilton Danilo Meskus
- 26 MR. HARWELL'S BINOCULARS (A short story) Armando S. Pires
- 29 DUELS IN VERSE Manuel Diéguez Júnior
- 33 OAS FOTO FLASHES
- 34 FROM THE NEWSSTANDS
- 38 ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT
- 39 BOOKS
 - FROM THE PAU BOOKSHELF
 - ART IN FEATHERS
 - EXHIBIT A
- 42 KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS' BEACHES?
- 43 LETTERS
- 44 GRAPHICS CREDITS

Published by

Pan American Union, General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, Washington 6, D. C., U. S. A.
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Ceramic folk sculpture of Brazilian troubadours holding a poetry competition (see "Duels in Verse," page 29)

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MEMO FROM THE EDITORS:

As the human animal grows bigger and bigger (University of Cincinnati studies have established that in the United States, at least, college freshmen in 1949 were almost three inches taller and twenty-two pounds heavier than those in 1917), he in turn is busily reshaping nature. Some of the oddities he has come up with are detailed by AMERICAS Associate Editor Adolfo Solórzano Díaz in "Magic for the Farm"—about the agricultural experiment station at Beltsville, Maryland, fifteen miles northeast of the U.S. capital. The results of its experiments are now being applied in many parts of the Hemisphere; the farm itself draws thousands of foreign visitors every year, not to mention entire classes of local students. One rather wistful aspect of Beltsville as a showplace is the opportunity it gives city children to view farm animals for the first time. . . .

Gilbert Chase, a well-known musicologist, suggested the sketch of the life and work of the Panamanian composer Roque Cordero—on page 7—because "he is producing some of the best music now coming out of Latin America." According to Dr. Chase, Cordero seemed fated to languish in relative obscurity until the performance of his brilliant Second Symphony at the Caracas Festival last year pushed him into the limelight. . . .

One of our most efficient talent scouts is the OAS Secretary General, who, on a recent official trip to Argentina, attended the Caminito Theater and was so enchanted with the whole idea of the stage in the street that he promptly asked Joaquín Gómez Bas to write an article about it for AMERICAS (page 12). The use of the natural setting and community participation reminds us of a Mexican theater experiment dealt with in a previous issue ("Cervantes in Guanajuato," June 1954). . . .

O'Higgins may be an unlikely surname for a Chilean hero, but it is one made famous by both father and son—Ambrosio and Bernardo, respectively. It's a toss-up as to which is the more colorful. We hope to follow the piece on Bernardo in this issue with an article on his father. . . .

The Brazilian bards described on page 29 preserve a musical tradition we trust will never die. So that you can appreciate the ready wit and imagination required to produce one of these original rhymes, we have printed the Portuguese originals alongside the English translations. . . .

Pan American Week brought Washington quite a different but just as genuine a manifestation of folklore—far removed from the fake bananas-on-the-head or sleeping-Mexican varieties. This was a song-and-dance troupe of textile workers from Medellín, Colombia, known as the *Conjunto Tejicondor*. Dominican-born Hilton Meskus, AMERICAS assistant editor who accompanied them on some of their sightseeing expeditions and later wrote them up (page 23), recalls with a shudder their shopping spree in U.S. suburbia. Eagerly they descended on the sprawling Seven Corners Shopping Center at the edge of metropolitan Washington. In deference to their pocket-books and to the obliging sales clerks—who willingly dragged out everything on the shelves even when the visitors were "just looking"—he tactfully conveyed them through the maze of temptations toward the more modestly priced merchandise. He reports that on the way back to town their enthusiasm built up to such a pitch that, virtually submerged in packages, the whole busload burst into *The Star-spangled Banner* in Spanish.

Red-and-gold plaque, one of two covering altar bells in eighteenth-century Honduran church. Glittering as bells were rung, they were thought by Indians to be the sun. In Museum of Religious Art, Comayagua



Meter connected to mask over muzzle of Sindhi-Jersey crossbred checks amount of air breathed in heat-tolerance test

ADOLFO SOLÓRZANO DÍAZ

THE ASTONISHED VISITOR finds himself in a fabulous wonderland where animals and plants defy Father Sun and flowers open on pre-arranged schedule, where fruits are seedless, chickens nearly all breast, and bees invulnerable to disease. The wizard behind these and many other marvels is the modern scientist who keeps his bag of tricks at the Agricultural Research Center at Beltsville, Maryland.

This unique U.S. Department of Agriculture "ranch," just fifteen miles from Washington, D.C., began operations in 1910 on some 680 acres as a station for cattle experiments. But in the thirties, President Franklin D.

magic

Agricultural Center at Beltsville, Maryland, transforms plants and animals

Roosevelt urged its expansion into the vast, diversified institution it has become today. Now some two thousand people work there, half of them specialists in fields ranging from human nutrition to the application of atomic energy to plant genetics. The annual budget runs to twelve million dollars.

Beltsville is the nerve center of the Department's nationwide research program, which in turn is coordinated with the work of the individual states. As such, it deals mainly with broad agricultural problems of national interest, accumulating basic scientific information that can be applied in the various regions. The benefits of its findings extend beyond U.S. territorial limits. It gives advice to countries in all parts of the world, particularly in Latin America.

Today the Center covers some eleven thousand acres of gently rolling land, with pastures, woods, gardens, plots for soil treatment, and 950 buildings that include fifty-eight laboratories, thirty-one greenhouses (about

for the farm



Wild (left) and cultivated varieties of quinoa, a promising South American cereal plant now being studied at Beltsville. Specimens shown are at experiment station near Cuzco, Peru

six acres are under glass), 161 barns and storage buildings, seven hundred small-animal and poultry houses, workshops, an apiary, a granary, a warehouse, and heating, water-treatment, and sewage-disposal plants. One relic of the farm that occupied the site before the Center was established is still in service. This is a white house on a hill, built with bricks brought as ballast in English ships that came to America to pick up tobacco in colonial days. The modern administration building is also in colonial style.

For experimental work, the Center has a herd of dairy cattle, many sheep and goats, and thousands of pigs, chickens, and turkeys, as well as small laboratory animals. But more impressive than the size of the installation is the novelty of the experiments and their remarkable results. Here science seems determined not only to keep up with but to run ahead of the progress of civilization. Taking changes in human diet into account, it develops crops and food products that are more nutri-

tious or higher yielding, more resistant to temperature extremes and drought, and immune to insect plagues. The wizard has used his magic even to change the shape of certain animals.

The famous Beltsville turkey, for example, is a bird whose metamorphosis made its delicious meat a practical year-round item for the typical U.S. small family. No longer must turkey be regarded as a voluminous delicacy that can only be enjoyed when the clan is gathered at Thanksgiving or Christmas in sufficient numbers to do it justice. Nor do the dimensions of refrigerators or stoves in tiny apartments rule it off the menu. The Beltsville breed is a small white turkey with a compact body, short legs, and a large and tender breast to please those who prefer white meat. It was developed by crossing many varieties, each of which contributed one or more of the desired characteristics: the standard Bronze, the smaller Canadian Bronze or Charlevoix, the Broad-breasted Bronze, the Black, the wild turkey, the White Holland, the Narragansett, and the White Austrian. In appearance, the Beltsville turkey is like the White Holland, but smaller and meatier. The toms average from twelve to



Seeds of quinoa can be ground into flour high in vitamin content. Plant grows at over ten thousand feet in Andes

seventeen pounds live weight and the hens from seven to ten at full market size, as compared with twenty-five and fifteen, respectively, for ordinary turkeys. Moreover, they are ready for the market in five or six months instead of seven. The biggest demand, in fact, is for young birds of fourteen to seventeen weeks, weighing four to eight pounds dressed. The Center does not sell them directly for consumption, but provides breeding stock to farmers. Actually, none of its products are sold on the market, and all surplus animals are donated to government charity institutions.

The pig is another animal whose profile has been changed at Beltsville because of public preference. Some time ago a hog ready for marketing was supposed to have at least a two-inch layer of fat on its back. But in modern home cooking, vegetable oils have almost re-

placed lard and housewives prefer lean meat. In 1934 the Department of Agriculture imported some Landrace and Yorkshire pigs from Denmark to cross with U.S. breeds. By studying the animals' fecundity, survival rate, size, and growth, and the effectiveness of various feeds, the Center set out to produce pigs with a minimum of fat and a maximum of meat for ham and bacon. It developed seven inbred lines that average nine or ten in a litter at birth and six or seven at weaning time. These pigs are ready for market in some six or seven months. The races produced by crossing Landrace with Poland China and with a combination of Yorkshire, Duroc, and Hampshire have attained the status of pure blood lines and are registered as Beltsville No. 1 and No. 2.

In 1946 the Center began developing cattle that would be better adapted to the extreme summer heat that prevails in states on the Gulf of Mexico. For this purpose, it crossed domestic breeds with Red Sindhi animals obtained from the Agricultural Institute of Allahabad, India, and studied their offspring. Resistance to heat was measured in a special heat chamber with complex physiological-testing devices.

Most of the cows in the dairy herd are black-and-white Holsteins with enormous udders, giving an average of ten gallons of milk a day in two milkings. There are beautiful specimens of Jersey, Holstein, and zebu bulls. Again there is a wonderland touch in the functional details arranged for the comfort of the star cattle. When an animal is thirsty, it need only press its nose to its

individual drinking fountain, which is connected to the piping, and water gushes out automatically. To keep the bulls in condition, they are tied to the arms of a kind of gigantic turnstile or "merry-go-round" and exercised by walking around for several miles. The forage silos are built above ground, unlike most of those in Latin America. A small conveyor-belt device extracts the silage at the bottom.

A major problem for the dairy researchers is how to reduce the proportion of low-milk-producing cows that are born every year. It is estimated that only a third of the animals yield a profit, another third barely pay their keep, and the rest represent net losses. Farmers generally cull the cows that are a burden to maintain. This is not done at the Center, since it is after complete breeding information. By using proved sires, it has been able to raise the cows' production of butterfat by 30 per cent over the standards of the animals the herd started with, which were 678 and 622 pounds a year, respectively, for the Holstein and Jersey breeds. In some cases, artificial breeding to sires in New York and Pennsylvania has been used. This method has been widely adopted throughout the Hemisphere because it combines economy and speed with quality lineage. The Center has also developed cattle that yield meat and milk of equal excellence and sheep that not only make good eating but also are heavy wool producers.

But the beneficent genius of Beltsville is not limited in application to animals, plants, and insects. It reaches



In these buildings, research is carried on in human nutrition, entomology, plant pathology, chemistry, and soil engineering



Beltsville-developed Small White turkey hen (left) weighs nine pounds dressed, compared to fifteen for Broad-breasted Bronze

through the walls of the modern home to man himself. Specialists of the human-nutrition section, who include biologists and experts in home economics, have influenced today's diet and are studying a still better one for the future. Their task is not only to improve methods of preserving, cooking, and preparing foods but also to watch out for their appearance, texture, usefulness, and flavor, and, in the case of certain fruits and vegetables, the effects that various insecticides may have on taste and possible toxicity. There is even a section that is in charge of designing model rural houses and furniture and testing fabrics appropriate for farmers' clothing at different seasons.

Beltsville brings the latest advances of medicine and chemistry to bear on animal and plant problems. Plants receive streptomycin, which, circulating through their sap, protects them from disease. Phosphorus compounds applied to cotton seed kill the weevils and worms that later attack the grown plants. Certain plant hormones regulate growth processes. For example, a teaspoonful of one in a hundred gallons of water makes a spray that keeps apples from falling before they are ripe. One compound has produced seedless tomatoes; another destroys weeds without hurting grass. This last, known as 2,4-D, is already in general use. With feedings of streptomycin,

the Center has protected bees, which are vital for the pollination of many crops, from European foul brood, their worst disease. Cutting the length of the night through artificial illumination retarded the blossoming of chrysanthemums so they would still be in bloom for Christmas sale.

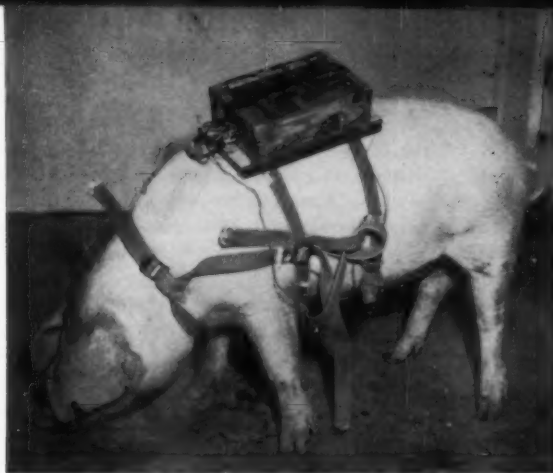
These remarkable discoveries and investigations have drawn to Beltsville visitors from all over the country and the world—last year alone there were eighteen thousand. The institution is open to the public and provides free consultation, since its main objective is to obtain



Colchicine applied to bud of grape cutting may induce genetic change, producing variety that might never appear in nature

new knowledge and encourage its application. Guides steer groups of visitors through its scattered offices, which reach far back from the main highway. But advance appointments are desirable to visit the busy specialists or to see areas where animal diseases are under study.

On the international front the Center has stepped up its technical and practical assistance to Latin America. Four years ago, for example, it advised the Chilean and Mexican governments on ways of improving the teaching of veterinary medicine. Latin American cattle raisers take advantage of a vaccine against brucellosis perfected by the Center back in 1940, while farmers in many lands



Piggy-back radio transmitter sends record of animal's heartbeat for basic physiological study

are able to diagnose the terrible pollorum or white diarrhea of poultry quickly by using an antigen developed at the Center. The Beltsville laboratories also developed a vaccine in the form of violet crystals that is being successfully used against hog cholera in Brazil, Chile, and other countries. Commercially produced batches of preventive medicines are tested at Beltsville at regular intervals. The Center also cooperated with Mexican scientists to help stem the 1946 outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in their country.

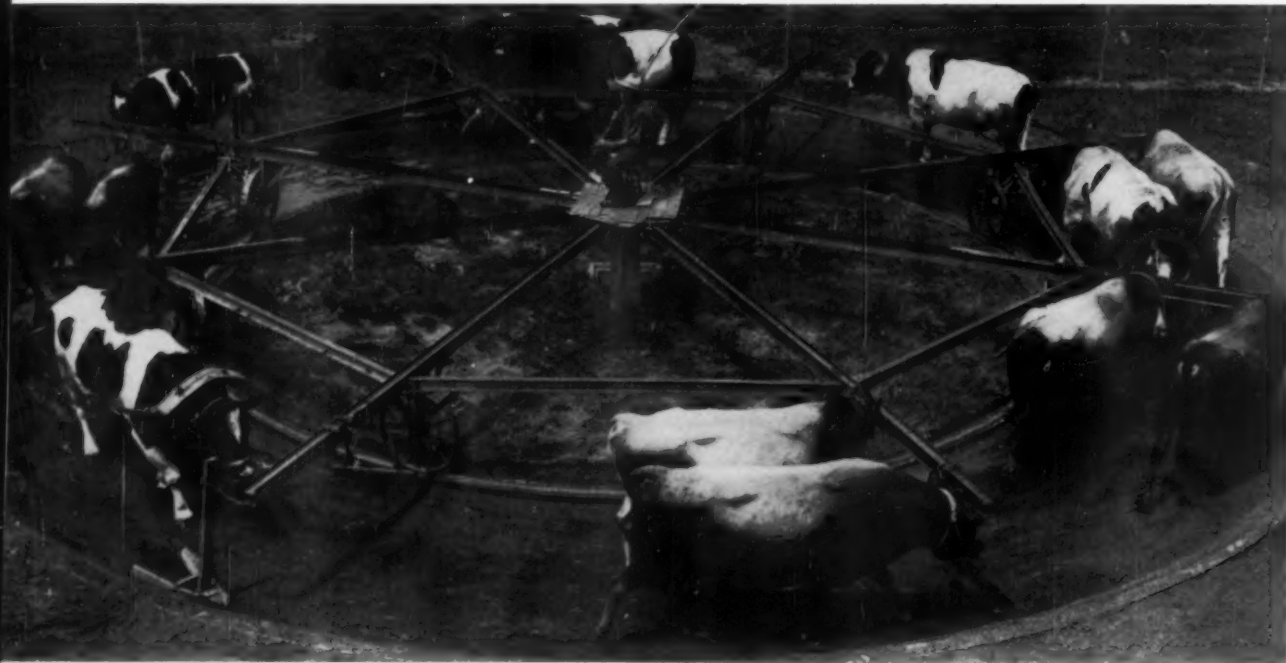
In the spring of 1950, international experimental nurseries for studying wheat rust were opened at Pelotas, Brazil; Castela, Argentina; Paine, Chile; La Molina, Peru; Quito, Ecuador; Bogotá, Colombia; and Mexico City. Later this program was extended to Bolivia and Paraguay. The primary objective is to find varieties

resistant to stem rust, the main hazard for this crop in Latin America. Some fourteen thousand strains of wheat from all over the world have been tested for rust-resistance in the United States. The most promising are planted and tested in cross-pollination experiments at these international nurseries. Field trials have already revealed at least ten varieties resistant to the strains of rust so far identified in South America. The best are types that came from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Peru. These operations are carried out in collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation—which also has a similar program for corn—and the national ministries of agriculture.

Research goes on continually at Beltsville. Aside from the divisions that deal with animal disease and animal husbandry, there are divisions of entomology, plant pathology and breeding, soil and water conservation, and agricultural engineering. Every year thousands of plant specimens, seeds, and fibers unknown in this country are sent from distant lands to determine their usefulness, adaptability to local conditions, and commercial value. One such plant now under study is quinoa, or pigweed, from Peru and Bolivia, a cereal that can be ground into flour like wheat but is much richer in vitamins. In the Andean areas where it is a staple, people have been found to be healthier and taller than their non-quinoa-eating neighbors.

As the Beltsville wizards offer new marvels, perhaps the day will come when they will reveal the secret of photosynthesis. When man learns how a plant manufactures food, he should have the key to freedom from hunger. ● ● ●

Daily hikes around this turnstile keep bulls of Beltsville's dairy herd in top condition

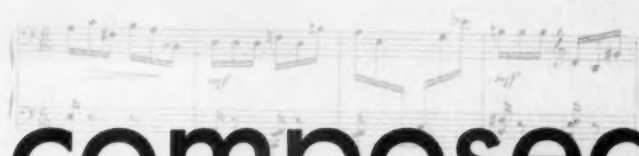


SONATINA RITMICA

ROQUE CORDERO

1943

Presto con furia $\text{♩} = 164$



composed by

CORDERO

GILBERT CHASE

NOT LONG AGO, the Panamanian composer Roque Cordero was unknown outside a small circle of professional musicians and critics who closely follow musical developments in Latin America and are as eager to recognize new talent when it appears on the horizon as Balboa was to glimpse the Pacific Ocean from a peak in Darien. I am proud to say that I have followed Cordero's career with keen interest ever since the early 1940's, when I introduced his *Capricho Interiorano* in the United States on the "Music of the New World" radio program over NBC. Today his name is known wherever contemporary music is played, thanks chiefly to the tremendous success of his Second Symphony, one of the prize-winning

The author of A Guide to Latin American Music, among a number of other books on music, GILBERT CHASE has been director of the University of Oklahoma School of Music and served with the U.S. embassies in Peru and Argentina as cultural attaché, a post he now holds in Belgium.

works in the Second Festival of Latin American Music held at Caracas in March and April 1957. This symphony triumphed again at its U.S. première this spring; it was performed by the National Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Howard Mitchell during the First Inter-American Music Festival, held in Washington, D.C., on April 18, 19, and 20.

Up to now, the music of Panama has been chiefly typical songs and dances and marches, with occasional more ambitious attempts by talented amateurs who wrote music in their spare time. Progress in musical education and performance was being made, thanks to the efforts of such devoted musical leaders as Herbert de Castro and Gonzalo Brenes, but all the signs pointed to long toil before the ground was prepared for a composer in the larger forms with a complete command of past and present technical resources. Yet such a composer has appeared in Panama, in the person of Roque Cordero.

The honors heaped upon the Second Symphony climax one of the most remarkable success stories in the annals of American music. Besides being handicapped by an unpropitious time, place, and environment, Cordero came of a family with no musical heritage. His people were poor, hard-working folk, his father a shoemaker. Two sisters and a brother showed no signs of musical talent. But Roque—born on August 16, 1917—revealed unmistakable musical gifts at an early age. His parents saw to it that he received violin and clarinet lessons. He also studied the piano for about a year, then gave it up for good (he now thinks that one of the best things that can happen to a composer is not to be able to play the piano—it removes all temptation to “compose at the keyboard”).

Like most budding Panamanian musicians, Cordero started writing popular music when he was still in his teens—marches, *pasillos*, *tamboritos*, and even a tango. Recognition came quickly, when his Carnival march, *Reina de Amor*, won the National Prize in 1937. This piece also enjoyed some popularity in the United States, where it was called *Spirit of Panama*. As we shall see, it had a rather crucial rôle in Cordero's future career.

Despite this success and the lack of demand for anything but popular music, Cordero was determined to try his hand at “serious” composition. He was only seventeen when he began. His ambition was to be a conductor as well as a composer, and in 1938 he became conductor of the Musical Union Orchestra (which later developed into the National Symphony Orchestra of Panama). Meanwhile, he had been studying composition with the best teachers available in Panama, including Herbert de Castro. In 1939 he wrote the first orchestral composition that he cares to acknowledge, the *Capricho Interiorano*, based on the rhythms and themes of the *mejorana*, the best-known traditional dance-song of Panama. Although it belongs to the picturesque type of “national” music so prevalent in Latin America, the *Capricho* showed signs of a superior organizational capacity and sense of formal structure. The big question was, would Cordero have an opportunity to develop his creative capacities to their utmost? Not until some years later, in 1943, could this question definitely be answered in the affirmative. In March of that year, through the Institute of International Education in New York, Cordero received a scholarship to study music education at the University of Minnesota, in Minneapolis.

When Cordero's ambition to be a conductor became known, he was invited to conduct the University Concert Band in a performance of his prize-winning Carnival march, *Reina de Amor*. So impressed by both the performance and the music was John K. Sherman, music critic of the Minneapolis *Star-Journal*, that he then and there decided to do everything possible to help the young composer. As a beginning, he promised to introduce Cordero to Dimitri Mitropoulos, at that time director of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra. After several months, in October, Mr. Sherman arranged a dinner invitation for Cordero.

When the great day arrived, Cordero took with him



Roque Cordero, right, receives “distinguished guest” diploma from president of Caracas Municipal Council during 1957 festival

the score of his *Capricho Interiorano*, considering it more appropriate for showing to a symphony conductor than *Reina de Amor*. Looking over the score, Mitropoulos praised the orchestration but told the young composer that he needed to study counterpoint. Then he said that though he could play the *Capricho* with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra without discredit to either the orchestra or the composer, he would not do it, because if he did, Cordero would begin to fancy himself an accomplished composer with no need for further study. And then he would go on writing more works, perfectly acceptable but not equal to the best he was capable of. These words—among the wisest that any eminent musician could say to an aspiring young colleague—were followed by wise action: Mitropoulos introduced Cordero to the notable Viennese composer Ernst Krenek, who was teaching at near-by Hamline University, with a recommendation that he be accepted as a student in counterpoint and composition. The beginning of his studies with Krenek, which were to last nearly four years, marked the turning point in Cordero's development as a composer.

Krenek at that time already had an established reputation as one of the leading exponents of Schoenberg's “method of composing with twelve tones related only to each other” (instead of employing the usual tonal relationships, such as tonic-dominant, inherent in the traditional harmonic system of European composition). But it would be a mistake to assume, as some have done, that Cordero received his initiation to twelve-tone writing from Krenek. In the first place, Cordero's principal field of study with Krenek was strict Palestrinian counterpoint—the musical diet prescribed by Mitropoulos. In the second place, Cordero had become acquainted with the music of Schoenberg some years before coming to the United States—a feat that could only have been accomplished through the combination of alertness and good luck that seems always to have accompanied Cor-

dero. It so happened that a German cellist passing through Panama in 1940 had some scores by Schoenberg, including *Pierrot Lunaire* and *Transfigured Night*, that he was willing to sell. Cordero was a prompt and eager buyer. It was the emotional message, the expressionist fervor, in Schoenberg's music that attracted him, rather than the twelve-tone method as such.

The encouragement given to Cordero by Dimitri Mitropoulos did not stop at good advice. When his original grant expired, Mitropoulos gave the young musician a private scholarship covering tuition and living expenses, which enabled him to continue his studies with Krenek until June 1947. Cordero has never forgotten this generous act. Immediately after his graduation *magna cum laude* from Hamline University, he married Betty Lee Johnson, a trombonist and music-education major whom he had met at the University of Minnesota. And when their first child, a son, was born in Minneapolis two years later, they named him Dimitri.

Meanwhile, Cordero had been busy as a composer. His First Symphony, completed in 1945, received an honorable mention in the Reichold Music Contest for composers of the Americas. (Incidentally, as a commentary on the difficulty of getting a hearing for contemporary works, this symphony was not performed until ten years later, when the composer conducted it with the National Symphony Orchestra of Panama.)

The *Panamanian Overture* No. 2, composed the year before, received its première with the Minneapolis Symphony under Mitropoulos on April 5, 1946. It is characteristic of Cordero's aims as a composer that this

score, instead of being (as the title might imply) a mere potpourri of "national airs," or a picturesque evocation of local color, is in fact constructed in sonata-allegro form, with two contrasting principal themes, the first lively and vigorous, the second (announced by the French-horn solo) *Molto tranquillo*. The development section and recapitulation are followed by a coda, in which the two principal and the two subordinate themes are presented simultaneously (contrapuntally), and *each in a different key*. Thus, by 1944 Cordero was already beginning to profit by his studies in counterpoint and to venture boldly on the path of polytonality, as well as to display the sense of form that has remained fundamental for him.

In the conducting phase of his musical training, Cordero received a scholarship from Serge Koussevitzky that enabled him to study with Stanley Chapple at the Berkshire Music Center in Massachusetts during the summer of 1946. A grant from the Government of Panama made it possible for him to continue his work in conducting from 1947 to 1949 with Leon Barzin and the National Orchestral Association in New York City.

Just when it seemed that the sojourn in the United States from which he had benefited so deeply was coming to a close, he was notified that he had been awarded one of the coveted John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellowships, for the year 1949-50. Greatly encouraged and creatively stimulated, he began at once to work on one of his most important compositions, the Quintet for flute, clarinet, violin, cello and piano. The catalogue of his compositions had been growing steadily and already included, in addition to the *Capricho Interiorano* and the First Symphony, two *Panamanian Overtures* for orchestra, a *Sonatina Rítmica* for piano, *Dance in the Form of a Fugue* for string quartet, and *Two Short Pieces* for violin and piano.

At last, in August 1950, Cordero returned with his wife and child to Panama, there to take up the life and work of a musical leader in his native country. He began as a professor at the National Institute of Music. A year later he became assistant director, and in 1953 he was appointed executive director. He was thus in a key position to influence the course of music education in Panama, and eminently qualified for the opportunities and responsibilities of such a task, to which he devoted himself with characteristic energy. His educational reforms marked a big step forward in the musical life of Panama.

Although his teaching and administrative duties required the expenditure of much time and effort (and also brought not a few difficulties, which always beset the road of a reformer and innovator), Cordero was determined to pursue vigorously his creative work as a composer. The big opportunity came when the announcement was made of an important competition sponsored by the José Angel Lamas Institution of Caracas and open to composers of all the Latin American countries. Contestants had to submit, under a pseudonym, a large work for symphony orchestra, not hitherto performed. The winning works would be selected by a jury of eminent composers of the Americas, and the first prize would be



Cordero greets Leonard Bernstein, newly appointed conductor of New York Philharmonic, at reception following orchestra's appearance in Panama City on seven-week Latin American tour

ten thousand dollars in cash out of a total of twenty thousand—a magnificent sum for “serious” music, which, instead of bringing the composer any remuneration, often costs him money to have performed. Cordero decided to write a symphony in one movement (his second) for the Caracas competition. In addition to the cash award, there was the further incentive of having his work played by the Venezuelan Symphony Orchestra at the Second Festival of Latin American Music, to be held in Caracas in March and April 1957. Driving himself late at night in his office at the National Institute of Music, Cordero wrote his Second Symphony in just eight weeks—between July 5 and August 30, 1956.

After months of anxious waiting, the Caracas jury announced its results: no score was judged sufficiently outstanding to receive the full first prize; therefore, four prizes of five thousand dollars each would be awarded to the winning contestants, who were Blas Galindo of Mexico, Camargo Guarnieri of Brazil, Enrique Iturriaga of Peru—and Roque Cordero of Panama.

With the award came an invitation to attend the Caracas Festival, along with some thirty-five other composers from Latin America, Europe, and the United States. On the night of Saturday, April 6, 1957, in the spectacular José Angel Lamas Amphitheater, built on one of the many Caracas hillsides, Roque Cordero mounted the stage to acknowledge the ovation that greeted the world première of his Second Symphony in One Movement, which Carlos Chávez had just conducted with the Venezuelan Symphony Orchestra. It was partly a personal tribute to a man whose integrity and cordiality had won him the respect and liking of all who met him; but it also demonstrated in an impressive manner that even the supposedly “forbidding” twelve-tone technique could not set up a barrier to communication between a composer with something genuine to say and an audience receptive to the emotional message of a sincere and well-wrought piece of music.

Naturally, Cordero did not write his symphony simply to win a prize—welcome as the award was both for the glory and for the cash (the latter especially welcome to a family man with two children and another on the way). The urge to write another symphony—to express in music all the varied emotions that he had lived through during the past few years—had been in his mind for some time. The dramatic intensity that marks the Second Symphony is indicated at the very outset by the leaping upward theme in fifths, a sort of anguished cry, uttered by the trumpets and trombones. Joyful dance rhythms contrast with the despairing cries of shrill instruments. A trace of bitterness is in the closing chords, but the ultimate message is one of affirmation and spiritual triumph.

When Cordero arrived in Caracas, he walked into the middle of a heated controversy between the partisans of musical nationalism and the adherents of twelve-tone music (the latter a definite minority). The flames of controversy were being fanned by the local journalists, and everyone was eagerly adding fuel. Speaking up with the voice of reason, Cordero pointed out that the whole



The composer with author Gilbert Chase at 1957 Caracas Festival, where Cordero's Second Symphony won a prize

discussion was based on a false premise, since logically there could be no direct conflict between nationalism and twelve-tone composition. The method of composing with twelve tones, he stated, was simply a technical innovation and, like all techniques, merely a means to an end. On the other hand, nationalism is not a technique but an end in itself. In Cordero's words, “what really matters is whether or not the individual so labeled is really a composer at all. For me, a composer is someone who, having something to say, says it . . . with complete technical command, revealing the quality of his musical thinking in the concrete reality of sound. And this musical thinking should be expressed in the language of his own time.”

Cordero is against all restrictive labels of any kind. “I don't wish to classify my music as tonal, polytonal, or atonal,” he says. “Mine is essentially *music*, and, as such, it is the expression of thoughts that can be understood only through the medium of sound, no matter how agreeable or disagreeable these combinations may seem to the listener. I don't try to write ‘pretty’ music in order to please the public, but neither do I try to distort my melodic ideas and my harmonic feeling in order to appear ‘different.’ Music is an art of expression, and in the search for that expression I try to make use of the technical achievements of past and present generations, without, however, allowing my musical ideas to be subordinated to any particular school.”

This kind of talk makes good sense. So do Cordero's ideas on the subject of musical nationalism, about which so much feeling has been stirred up in Latin America: “My music is not nationalist in the sense of being a deliberate exploitation of the folklore of my country; but this music of mine, if I am to be sincere with myself, must be the expression of something that belongs to my people and that would not permit it to sound like French, German, or Italian music. I try to express that ‘something’ through melodic figures related to our folklore and through exploiting the rhythmic vitality of our

dances, such as the *mejorana* and the *tamborito*."

Cordero does not believe that musical "flag-waving" is necessary or desirable in order to proclaim a composer's nationality. Patriotism, for him, is a sentiment, not a program. "Many of those who wave the flag for national music," he declares, "forget that any nationalism that cannot raise itself to the realm of great art by means of a vigorous transformation of the vernacular sources will remain a limited and backward type of expression. There is no justification for taking melodic and rhythmic fragments from our rural folk music in order to connect them with more or less acceptable 'bridges,' yet without any relation to the musical material as a whole, and pretending that in this way one is creating 'national art.' What is needed is to find the *essence* of our nationalism in the melodies and rhythms of our typical songs and dances, in order to create from them a *personal* art, which, precisely because it is personal, will be Panamanian without having to 'beat the drum' to proclaim its nationality. . . ." A good example is in the opening *Lento* of the Second Symphony (immediately after the Introduction), in which the second theme, stated by the violins, has rhythmic characteristics of the *tamborito*.

Obviously, Cordero practices what he preaches. Even in such overtly "national" scores as the *Rapsodia Campesina* for orchestra, or the ballet *Setetule*, based on themes of the Cuna Indians of the island of San Blas,

Cordero's music is never merely picturesque or loosely episodic. For him, musical composition is form as well as expression—both the latest technical advances and the traditional forms of sonata, theme with variations, or fugue, whatever best serves the composer's purpose.

In addition to the works already mentioned, Cordero has written *Five Miniatures* and *Nine Preludes* for piano, *Duo 1954* for two pianos, *Symphonic Movement* for string orchestra, *Introduction and Allegro Burlesco* for orchestra, *Eight Miniatures* for small orchestra, *Adagio Tragico* for string orchestra; *Sensemaya* for chorus, drum, and dancer; *Psalm 113* for mixed chorus; *Patria*, for narrator and chorus *a capella*; and a concerto in E minor for piano and orchestra. The catalogue is not a long one, but it is varied, representing almost every form of music except opera; and each score is the work of a true artist in whom sincerity and craftsmanship are completely synchronized.

Roque Cordero has many productive years ahead of him. He does not like to talk about work in progress, but it can be revealed that a concerto for violin and orchestra has high priority in his plans for the immediate future. So does the building of a house—made possible by the prize-winning Second Symphony—which was begun last year. When it is finished, Roque, Betty Lee, Dimitri, Rogelio, and Ricardo (now one year old) will for the first time live in a home of their own, "the house that music built." ♦ ♦ ♦

Cordero relaxes at home with sons Dimitri, nine; Rogelio, six; and Ricardo, one; and U.S.-born wife Betty



theater in the street

*Buenos Aires stages
eighteenth-century
Venetian comedy*

**Text and photographs by
JOAQUÍN GÓMEZ BAS**



Dry-land presentation of eighteenth-century Venetian comedy inaugurated unusual Caminito Theater in La Boca district of Buenos Aires

THE VARIOUS DISTRICTS of teeming Buenos Aires have personalities all their own. Belgrano is sober and restful, silent, almost isolated amid the heavy foliage of ancient trees, meticulous geometric gardens, and old mansions. The northern section of the city is aloof, aristocratic, cold, prim, the haughty bastion of the last of the old families. The southern district, really a suburb, is commonplace and sad, a faded reminder of an era being left behind. Each section adds another shade to the color scheme of the port. Of them all, the neighborhood that stands out because of its quaint architecture and cus-

JOAQUÍN GÓMEZ BAS, Argentine poet and prize-winning novelist, edits the literary magazine *Atlántida*, on whose staff he has served since 1928.

toms is La Boca del Riachuelo (the mouth of the rivulet).

The dark and muddy little stream from which it takes its name forms the most interesting stretch of its perimeter. Along the bank, sheds full of leather, piles of wood, grain elevators, and warehouses crammed with imported merchandise bear witness to La Boca's busy shipping trade. High bridges to Maciel Island span the river. And there are boats and more boats of every description: lighters and tugs, oil tankers, and trans-Atlantic liners. All this is La Boca's industrial and dynamic side. Or rather, this is how it is during the day.

Night works a miracle here. The river becomes invisible, the sharp lines of the warehouses disappear, the black sky softens the rigidity of the smoking chimneys,

the imposing ironwork of the bridges fades from sight overhead. Only a vague flat mass remains, perforated by the multicolored lights of its many night spots. Especially at the point known as La Vuelta de Rocha, where we find La Goleta, a restaurant and night club on the deck of an old schooner anchored there; El Rey del Chupín, strictly for shellfish addicts; El Capitán Tito, a relaxing place cheered by music and songs by both professional musicians and neighborhood volunteers; El Cocodrilo, in one of the last mansions resisting demolition; and still others that make the gloomy shore ring with noisy merriment.

But these cabarets are meeting with competition from an unexpected quarter; and, strangely enough, the competitor offers neither succulent dishes, nor orchestras, nor girls, nor drinks. It is the Caminito—"little road"—Theater.

Originally, *Caminito* was the name of a tango by the La Boca composer Juan de Dios Filiberto. In the most remote corners of the world this simple, tender melody has won a popularity denied to many more pretentious

By day, area known as La Vuelta de Rocha (in heart of La Boca) is all business; by night, cabarets and Caminito Theater take over



Juan de Dios Filiberto, composer of Caminito, on a walk through wretched alley before it was restored and named after song hit



Caminito, midway of rejuvenation process. House-painting was supervised by "enthusiastic advocate of chromatic clamor"

pieces of music. Its success is due mostly to a sleepy cadence that awakens nostalgia in romantics everywhere.

As with every phenomenal hit, the people were not content with the mere beauty of the music and a photograph of the composer. They demanded to know all about him—his life, his past, his childhood. More than that, they wanted an account, whether true or false, of how he had come to write the song—in a word, the legend behind it. So the legend grew, effortlessly, with no need for conscious invention.

At one side of La Vuelta de Rocha, a disused streetcar track ran between the buildings, forming a link, impassable to vehicles, between two streets. It was a short stretch, frequented only by the people who lived there and, at dusk, by an occasional furtive couple. This nameless alley, choked with weeds and sodden with stagnant water, had enough drama and mystery to satisfy the most demanding. There you heard the strumming of guitars, the songs of drunken sailors, children's game-



Benito Quinquela Martín, artist who directed Caminito restoration, in his private museum



Once filthy, weed-infested alley has become open-air art museum as well as theater



Close-up of Juan de Dios Filiberto in 1931. Slight frown is characteristic expression

songs, and screams of terror and tragedy. Working with Filiberto, Coria Peñaloza wrote lyrics that ignored this wretchedness and interpreted the scene with sentimental sympathy.

It was then quite natural for the renowned local painter Benito Quinquela Martín to suggest that the La Boca alley might well be named after the famous song. The baptism was decided on by spontaneous popular resolution, unhindered by municipal red tape.

Caminito's appearance soon changed. The streetcar tracks disappeared, the brush was cleared away, the surface was graded. The old houses were rejuvenated with

paint in many colors, applied under the direction of Quinquela Martín, an enthusiastic advocate of chromatic clamor. He also saw to it that both sides of the restored road became open-air museums, thanks to pictures and sculptures contributed by outstanding artists: Capurro, Perlotti, Vergotini, Quinquela Martín himself, and others.

It was not at all strange that an imaginative person, Cecilio Madanes, well known in Buenos Aires artistic circles, should see in the site, the atmosphere, and particularly the buildings, an excellent and original stage backdrop. His successful conception and installation of the Caminito Theater is one more step up a long ladder

of achievement. Because he proved himself so capable in his first theater job, as director of *Paphelin*, an anonymous fifteenth-century work translated by Rafael Alberti, in 1947 Madanes received a scholarship to pursue special studies at the Paris Conservatory of Music and Theater Arts. There he assimilated the experience of two masters of the stage: Louis Jouvet and Jean Renoir. With Luis Sasvlaski, he directed the Spanish actress Aurora Bautista in the recording of *Yerma* and *Doña Rosita* for the complete collection of Federico García Lorca's works on LP's. With this background, it was not surprising for Madanes to score a triumph in the difficult task of directing *I Pettegolezzi delle Donne* (Women's Gossip), by Carlo Goldoni. This piece, presented under the title *Los Chismes de las Mujeres*, was chosen to inaugurate the Caminito Theater.

Tulio Carella, who translated the play from the Italian, gives a very interesting account of it and of Goldoni in the program:

"On the last night of Carnival in 1749, Carlo Goldoni promised to write sixteen comedies for the following year. He made the commitment without having prepared

More scenes from Italian comedy by Carlo Goldoni. Residents give actors free use of houses, sometimes take part as extras



Maria Elena Sagrera as Cate, the gossipy laundress

Lelio, interpreted by Nathán Pinzón, gets the word from Harlequin, played by Jorge Luz



Beatriz Bonnet, Alberto Rinaldi, and Aida Luz in roles of Beatrice, a Roman lady; Ottavio, Checchina's father; and Eleanora, Beatrice's friend



the plots, without thinking how much work would be involved. His enemies made fun of him and called the proposal presumptuous. His friends feared for his reputation. Nevertheless, what seemed an idle boast became a reality. This case is unique in the history of the theater, which records almost magical improvisations but no other



Another scene from Goldoni's *I Pettegolezzi delle Donne* (*Women's Gossip*), presented in Spanish as *Los Chismes de las Mujeres*

Lelio (Nathán Pinzón) addresses two young actresses, neighborhood children who have volunteered to take part in play

such regular production en masse. The achievement ranks Goldoni among the most prodigious literary creators. In his memoirs, he confessed that he could not think of that terrible year without horror. Sixteen comedies in one year meant conceiving, developing, and putting on paper one play every twenty-three days, not to mention copying, rehearsing, and staging them.

"Goldoni kept working at his promise. He had written the fifteenth comedy. In a few days the last was to open. He had no idea for it. 'I went out,' he related in his memoirs, 'and, to divert my mind, I went to the Piazza of San Marco, to see whether some face might suggest a theme.' He watched the crowd. Under the arch of the clock tower he saw an old man in Armenian dress who peddled *abagiggi*, a kind of hazelnuts, through the streets of Venice. He was a well-known character. When people wanted to tease some husband-hunting girl, they would suggest him. Goldoni needed only to see this eccentric figure. The plot of *I Pettegolezzi delle Donne* occurred to him at once. He returned home and wrote one of the most beautiful works of popular customs of all time.

"In this comedy, as Antonio Marenduzzo has pointed out, the real protagonist is the vivacious chorus of women possessed by a mania for malicious gossip and for divulging their neighbors' secrets.

"Carlo Goldoni's . . . comedies present innumerable perplexities and ultimately discourage and confound the translator. He realized this himself. 'On those who understand our tongue,' he wrote, 'it will have one effect; on



those who do not, another.' The amalgam of literary and colloquial language and dialect raises endless difficulties.

"To preserve the spirit and flavor of the original, we must choose a language that, if it is to hold the stage, has to sacrifice much of the original. The author's many plays on words are lost. . . . Apparent slips in Goldoni's prose and repetitions that seem to have some hidden purpose have been respected.

"The characters, however, remain intact, along with the lively situations, the jovial shrewdness of the dialogue,



Alicia Bellán as Checchina, Carlos Cotto as merchant Pantaloón, and Frank Nelson as Checchina's timid suitor Beppo

the ineffable charm of the narration, the life that overflows from the characters, and the mastery with which the action leads swiftly to the denouement.

"The first performance of this play was an unparalleled success. The overflow crowd outside the theater did not know whether the uproar indicated approval or disapproval, but, in fact, the audience was cheering Goldoni not only as the author of sixteen charming comedies but also as the Venetian poet who knew how to interpret the spirit, the ideals, and the tastes of his contemporaries. With penetrating simplicity, the playwright noted, 'And I was very glad that, after I had turned out fifteen comedies in one year, my sixteenth should still be tolerable.'

"It is no easy job to stage a work by Carlo Goldoni, since—like Molière, Shakespeare, or Calderón de la Barca—he gives no stage directions, or at best only a few. After all, he directed his own plays and worked with highly trained actors of the *commedia dell'arte*. Today's director must, for the most part, rely on his own intuition and ingenuity. But art can overcome all difficulties. And while there are many points of difference between the geography of La Boca and that of eighteenth-century Venice, the director and the actors have tried to make allowances and offer the audience a Venetian evening on the shores of the Riachuelo."

The staging of *Los Chismes de las Mujeres*, which included making it palatable for a modern audience and keeping up the dynamic pace it demands, has confirmed Madanes' surprising creative capacity. Suffice it to mention how expertly he has handled the frequent changes of scene, sustained the farcical rhythm of the action and speeches, and selected the brief musical interludes.

Madanes' finest stroke is the way he has used the natural scenery of the surrounding houses to best advantage. Real balconies and rooftops, barely retouched, ex-



Entire cast taking curtain call. Note occupants of house (upper right), where earlier balcony scenes took place

tend the dimensions of the stage. And the neighbors themselves become supers, with no regrets for the hours of rest they lose because of the show's proximity.

Los Chismes de las Mujeres is an unprecedented hit. Night after night the audience gathers from every corner of Buenos Aires. People from every level of society cheer Nathán Pinzón's original and clever comic characterization of Lelio; the charm of the actress Aída Luz; Frank Nelson's acting in the role of Beppo; and the picaresque impudence of María Elena Sagrera, who assumes the identity of the laundress Catte with the authority of a consummate artist. The cast is so large that it is impossible to mention each member, but it should be noted that the show's best point is its ensemble acting.

When the theater industry wanted to show its appreciation for the government's encouragement of its activities, invitations to the Caminito Theater were decided upon as the best token. The President, Vice-president, other dignitaries, and their wives accepted enthusiastically.

Once, overwhelming swarms of mosquitoes invaded Caminito, but undaunted theatergoers simply came equipped with insect-repellent candles, which they lit and held in their hands throughout the performance. The show goes on even when it rains: the cast gets wet, the audience opens umbrellas. ♦ ♦ ♦



The Years of O'Higgins

CHILE'S IRISH HERO

ENRIQUE BUNSTER

SHEER CHANCE gave South America a courageous and colorful independence hero, and the little Chilean town of Chillán Viejo the honor of being his birthplace.

In December 1777, a high official of the Captaincy-General of Chile was making an inspection tour of the Central Valley. This was Ambrosio O'Higgins, a fiery and dynamic Irishman of fifty-seven who went on to become Governor of Chile and then Viceroy of Peru. In Chillán Viejo he spent the night at the home of a prominent citizen named Simón Riquelme, the father of a daughter not yet eighteen years old. The following August, Isabel Riquelme gave birth to a son whose arrival must have been most inconvenient for a rising official of the Crown. The child, baptized Bernardo, was

reared in secret and for many years not allowed to use his father's surname.

In due course, Isabel married Félix Rodríguez, a high-principled man who became an affectionate adoptive father to Bernardo. Their daughter, Rosa Rodríguez, was a loving sister to him and a source of support and encouragement in subsequent days of adversity.

Though Ambrosio O'Higgins could not recognize his offspring publicly, he endeavored to give him the best possible education. Bernardo attended school in Lima and afterward was sent to study in Richmond, England. There he became acquainted with the cultures and virtues of the world's greatest power and was befriended by the Venezuelan mathematics professor Francisco de Miranda, precursor of South American emancipation. But he was unhappy and homesick in a foreign country, as his letters reveal. (To his father from London: "Be-

ENRIQUE BUNSTER, a Chilean journalist who contributes frequently to AMERICAS, has written several books on his country's history.

loved father and my greatest helper: Although I have written to Your Excellency on various occasions, I have never been favored with a reply. . . ." On his first attempt to return home, in 1800, he sailed from Cadiz on a Spanish ship, but it was captured by British men-of-war. After being held for eight days without food and losing all their baggage (including a piano Bernardo had bought for his mother), the passengers were put ashore at Gibraltar. He finally got to Chile the next year.

Though he had not celebrated his twenty-third birthday, his seriousness and experience gave him a look of maturity. Stocky and strong, with a ruddy complexion, blue eyes, and reddish hair, he was the typical impulsive Irishman. From his mother he had inherited small feet and hands and perhaps some artistic talent, for he painted and played the flute well. Much as he would have preferred a naval career, he settled on a farm he had inherited in Araucania.

When the war of independence broke out in 1811, O'Higgins promptly joined the patriots' army. The struggle was to ruin him, but inspired by Miranda he had written at the outset: "Whatever the consequences, I shall never repent." (He seems to have anticipated his future celebrity and meant to ease his biographers' task, for he kept every letter and paper concerning both his private and his public life. His archive—which eventually numbered twenty thousand documents and filled two wagons—is now being published in a monumental edition by the Chilean Government.)

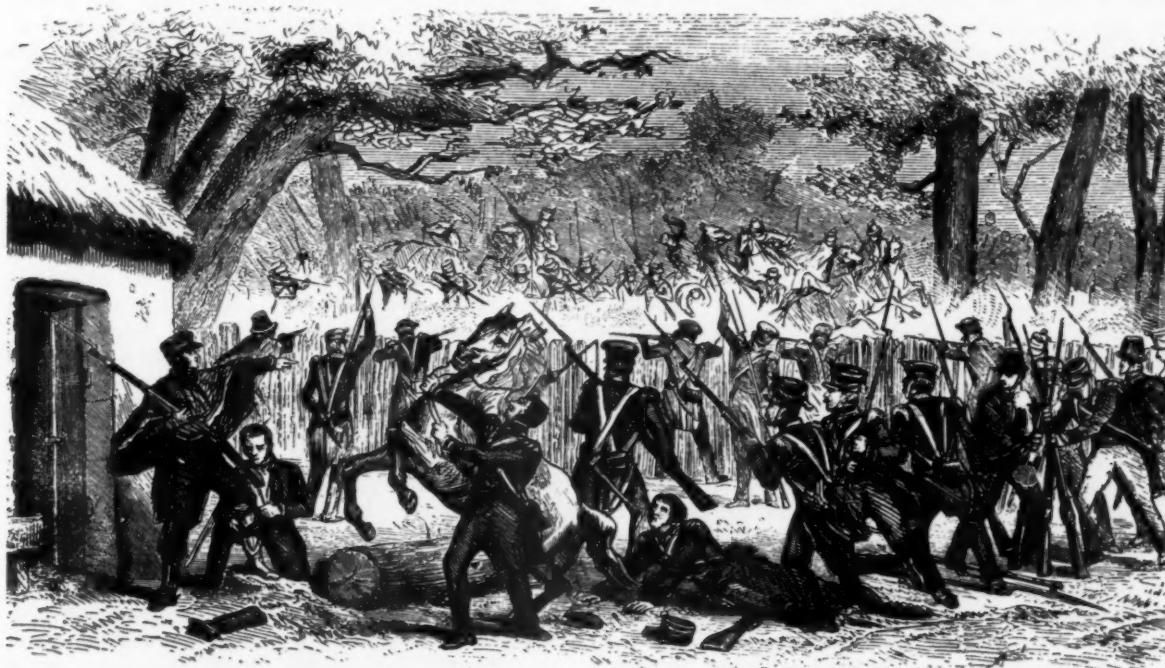
O'Higgins was elected a deputy to the first National Congress and later appointed commander of a regiment in the mounted militia. The farmer from Araucania

learned his military strategy by mail—he wrote for advice to the veteran Chilean soldier Colonel Juan Mackenna, who supplied him with books and manuals. His improvised army lacked weapons. For a cannon they used a hollow trunk wrapped with wire and set on a captured gun-carriage. The third time this weapon was fired it blew up in a thousand pieces, sending its crew to the hospital.

Compensating for lack of training with indomitable bravery, he soon became an intrepid warrior. At the height of the battle of the Roble River, he strolled through the front lines smoking a cigar and encouraging his men. When shot in the leg, he bandaged the wound with a handkerchief borrowed from his aide and continued his walk unperturbed. Noticing a U.S. Negro soldier who kept turning his face away as he fired, he took the musket away from him, fired it two or three times, and commented amiably: "That's the way to do it!"

Shortly after his victory at the Roble, toward the end of 1813, the patriots' Governing Junta appointed him to replace General José Miguel Carrera as commander-in-chief of the army. Burdened with the responsibility for liberating one million Chileans, he had first to cope with the jealousy of Carrera, an ambitious man unwilling to relinquish the glory of leading the revolution. A period of conspiracy and military coups was climaxed by the battle of Las Tres Acequias (The Three Ditches), in which O'Higgins was beaten and Carrera temporarily regained the army command and the presidency of the Junta.

While the Chileans were fighting each other, a new



Though Bernardo O'Higgins still knew little about warfare, his independence forces won Roble River battle (1813)



Battle of Chacabuco, O'Higgins' first on return from Argentina in 1817, opened patriots' way to Santiago

Spanish army under General Mariano Osorio marched in from Peru to give them the *coup de grâce*. O'Higgins decided to let bygones be bygones and agreed to work under his rival. Their joint forces numbered twenty-two hundred men; the enemy's, five thousand. Unequal as the combat would have been at best, it surprised O'Higgins at a time when Carrera had remained in the rear. Alone in the plaza of Rancagua, some fifty miles south of Santiago, O'Higgins had to face an army three times as large as his own. To make things worse, supplies and ammunition were running short and there was no time to evacuate the civil population. Women and children sought refuge in the churches while the patriots barricaded the plaza and posted sharpshooters on the roofs and in the church tower.

On the tragic morning of October 1, 1814, the Chilean flag bore a black streamer in signal that the garrison would neither give nor seek quarter. In the first attack the royalists had to withdraw after an hour, leaving their dead and wounded in the streets. Moving his artillery closer to the plaza, Osorio attacked with cannons and bayonet charges on all four sides. By nightfall, when the second and third assaults had been repulsed, the center of Rancagua looked like a slaughterhouse. At midnight the enemy cut the water supply and O'Higgins sent a desperate appeal to Carrera, but Carrera's reply was ambiguous and his division did not move. At daybreak, the royalists attacked again and were thrown back for the fourth time. A fifth attack, at noon, was also repulsed.

But O'Higgins' troops—decimated, exhausted, parched with thirst, suffocating from the dust and smoke of the

fires—could not hold out much longer. The powder in the overheated cannons took fire before the charges could be rammed home. A spark fell on the patriots' powder supply and blew up the scanty remnants of their ammunition. Still they held their ground and greeted Osorio's truce-bearer with a volley. After the sixth onslaught O'Higgins decided to break out of the trap with the five hundred men he had left. Mounting two and three men on horses maddened by thirst, and driving pack mules before them, he led the way through a rain of bullets past bristling bayonets and heaps of the fallen. His own horse collapsed and he had to take over the mount of a dead soldier. Meanwhile, the victors were sacking the flaming city. Twenty-odd men burned to death in what had been the field hospital.

This overwhelming defeat crushed the revolution and threw the undefended capital into a panic. What followed has no parallel in the history of American wars. Thousands of citizens abandoned their homes in Santiago and trekked across the Andes to Mendoza, Argentina, by coach or cart, on horseback, and afoot. Some carried their children in their arms. They scaled heights of thirteen thousand feet through treacherous passes. To clear a path through the snow they drove the animals ahead of them. O'Higgins took along his mother and his sister, while Carrera and his relatives fled with the government treasury. They had no food, shelter, or warm clothing, and their way was lined with the corpses of those who had succumbed to the bitter mountain cold. Few would have survived the six-day ordeal if the Argentine liberator José de San Martín, then Governor of Cuyo Province, had not sent a rescue squad with food

and saddle mules.

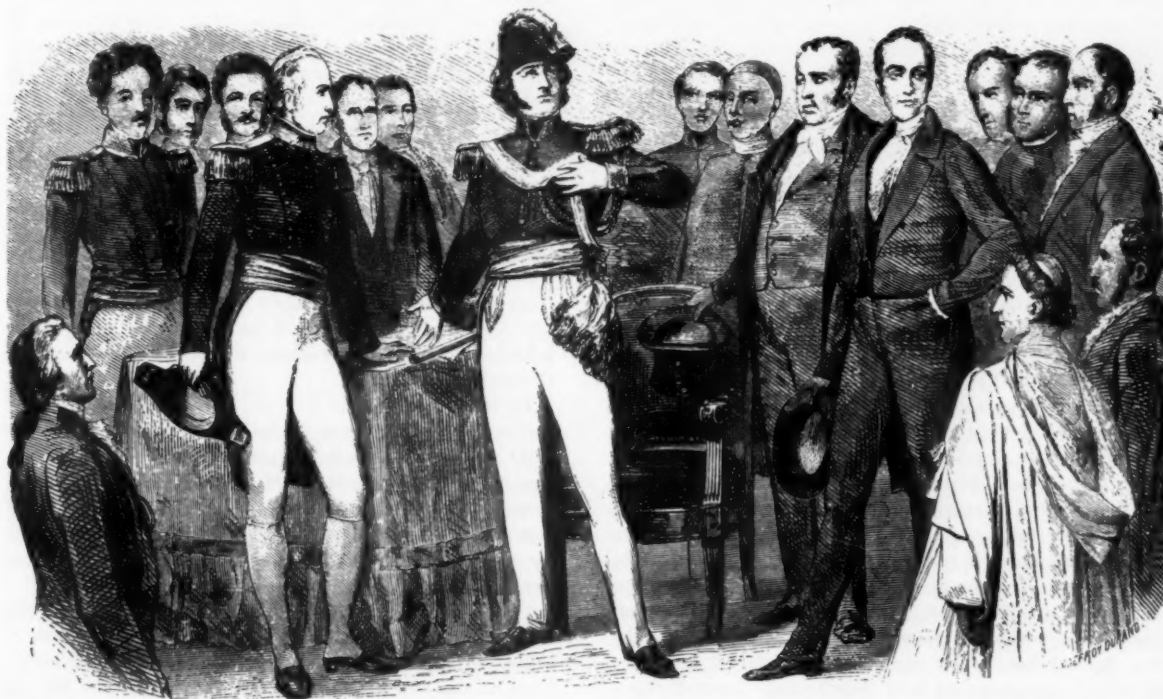
The hero of Rancagua was left in abject poverty. According to a contemporary, "there was no plate, spoon, or jewel" he did not have to sell. Anyone else would have felt utterly vanquished, but two years later he and San Martín, his "beloved friend," were setting off from Mendoza at the head of a Chilean-Argentine army of four thousand men with twenty cannons—the best-equipped, best-organized expedition that had ever been seen in South America. This was the first step in San Martín's bold plan to carry the war to the enemy on his home territory, the Viceroyalty of Peru.

They marched across the Andes without a hitch and on February 12, 1817, the date they had appointed, came face to face with the enemy on the hill of Chacabuco. O'Higgins, as if possessed, bolted ahead with the second division. In the rush, his two light cannons rolled off the road into a ravine and were lost. He flung himself at the enemy with the fury of one who has waited two years for his revenge. His red poncho was pierced by twenty bullets but not one touched him. Lacking artillery, his men fought with sabers and rifles in a confusion beyond description. Chacabuco was the final proof that O'Higgins was no soldier; but in two hours he had the royalists on the run, leaving four commanders and five hundred soldiers dead and six hundred prisoners.

The Spanish governor fled to the coast, en route to Peru, but was captured and sent to Argentina. Two days later San Martín entered Santiago in triumph and thirty-eight-year-old Bernardo O'Higgins was elected Supreme Director of the State by acclamation.

Neither a politician nor a statesman, he was nevertheless the only man who would have dared at that moment to undertake the double task of governing Chile and of preparing for the war against Peru. He began his government with semi-dictatorial powers. He established the Military School, abolished titles of nobility, created the Ministry of Finance and the Higher Police Court, and reduced the salaries of government employees. Wishing to make his country a naval power, he granted letters of marque that resulted in the capture of fifty Spanish merchantmen off the Peruvian coast. The first escadrille consisted of a brig captured from the enemy and three ships bought on the instalment plan, with crews recruited by a twenty-six-year-old artilleryman, Manuel Blanco Encalada, among fishermen, deserters from whaling ships, and Valparaíso beachcombers. Meanwhile, the first steam warship known in South America, the *Rising Star*, was being built for Chile in London, and Thomas Cochrane, tenth Earl of Dundonald, who had defeated Napoleon's last naval squadron at Basque Roads and was the most famous English sailor of the post-Nelsonian era, had been engaged to supervise the construction and then head the new Chilean navy.

Still in control of the seas, the Viceroy of Peru attempted a second reconquest, sending an expedition led by the undefeated Osorio, which landed in Talcahuano and joined the remnants of the Spanish troops beaten at Chacabuco. O'Higgins and San Martín, who had gone after the invaders, were surprised in the dead of night at their bivouac in Cancha Rayada. Forced to fight in the dark, their troops lost half their weapons and were



O'Higgins abdicates as Supreme Director of the State in 1822. This action, taken to prevent civil war, was followed by voluntary exile

finally dispersed in utter confusion. Again panic seized the capital. It was rumored that both O'Higgins and San Martín were dead, that the cause was lost. At the crucial moment O'Higgins reappeared, his jacket torn and one arm in a sling. Not far behind was San Martín, who arrived with a division that had escaped the disaster.

After three weeks of strenuous effort, the United Army was reorganized. When Osorio tried to attack Santiago, on April 5, 1818, San Martín met him on the plains of Maipú, about seven miles from the city. For six hours, as ten thousand soldiers waged the decisive battle, the roar of cannons could be heard in the city's streets and the smoke and dust seen from its church towers. Unmindful of his wounded arm, O'Higgins rode his horse out to the battlefield, followed by the cadets from the Military School and a group of the curious. Embracing San Martín, he exclaimed, "Glory to the savior of Chile!" and by his mere presence hastened the patriots' triumph. The townspeople who accompanied him crossed the firing line and ended the struggle by lassoing and tying up the fleeing royalists. Osorio escaped to the coast and embarked for Peru.

From then on, the Supreme Director lived only to make war on the Viceroyalty. He worked fourteen hours a day with his aide and three secretaries; his sole recreation was the company of his mother and of a pampered eight-year-old Indian girl he had brought up from the South, with whom he liked to speak Araucanian.

By squeezing the nation's treasury and the pockets of its well-to-do citizens, he equipped his small navy and sent it off to intercept a troop convoy en route from Spain to Callao. Blanco Encalada, with a group of seasick amateur sailors, attacked the Spanish convoy, boarding the flagship off Talcahuano and capturing the five scurvy-ridden transports without a fight.

This feat was still news when Admiral Cochrane arrived from England. In two years of amazing activity, Cochrane annihilated the Spanish fleet in the Pacific, shelled the port of Callao, seized the fortresses of Arica and Valdivia, and captured the Viceroy's flagship and the rest of his merchant marine. Cochrane imbued the Chileans with a tradition of discipline and gallantry that has prevailed to this day both in war and in peace. To provide a fitting navy for such a leader, O'Higgins founded the Naval School and contracted the services of British and United States officers. The nation's treasury was empty and O'Higgins himself could not be paid, yet the Bay of Valparaíso witnessed the marvelous array of a squadron of thirty-six warships and transports fully manned and equipped. And on August 20, 1820, O'Higgins' forty-second birthday, San Martín set sail with a Chilean-Argentine army of forty-six hundred men for the biggest undertaking of all: the expedition to liberate Peru.

From the pinnacle of glory, O'Higgins had nowhere to go but down. The spectacular phase of his administration was over; a difficult period of organization had to follow. The government enacted a constitution opening the way toward democratic evolution; established a senate; launched a program of land distribution; opened diplomatic relations with other American and European na-

tions; simplified the administration of justice; built a customs house in Valparaíso, a cemetery, and irrigation canals; created the Department of Public Sanitation; improved hospitals. International trade was trebled. Chilean copper was now shipped under the country's own flag to England and India, and United Kingdom bankers granted Chile a loan of one million pounds sterling. But the new nation's economy had been wrecked by the recent war. Seven hundred people died of starvation in the South. To cap the climax, two earthquakes laid waste the cities and towns of the midlands. O'Higgins' far-sighted projects could not be realized—his dreams of adopting steam navigation and building railroads; of establishing a national bank, savings institutions, and a school of agriculture; of colonizing Magallanes and exploring the Antarctic; of occupying the Falklands and the Galápagos; of conquering the Philippines; of promoting Irish immigration. He had even thought of introducing camels in the Atacama desert.

Toward the end of his tenure O'Higgins was branded an autocrat, an incompetent, a heretic, an inept and venal politician. History has now vindicated him. His only fault was his extreme good faith. On the other hand, his government was then waging a disastrous war in the South against an alliance of royalist guerrillas and Indians, and O'Higgins was accused of refusing to increase the government forces for fear their leader, General Ramón Freire, might turn against him.

Eventually, Freire and his ragged, unpaid troops revolted amid the general applause of the opposing political factions. It was then that O'Higgins taught the supreme civic lesson of his life. To avert the tragedy of a civil war he agreed to abdicate. Before an assembly of his fellow citizens on January 28, 1822, he announced his resignation and his immediate voluntary expatriation. Taking off the sash that was the symbol of his authority, he told the assembly: "I thank God for the favors bestowed on my government and beg Him to protect those who shall follow me." They answered him with an ovation, realizing that he was greater in downfall than in glory. Before leaving the hall, he exclaimed: "If my faults have caused misfortunes that can only be purged with my blood, take such vengeance on me as you wish! Here is my breast." Savagely the son of the Irishman tore open his coat, ripping off the buttons, as the assembly rendered him its last homage: a resounding "Long live General O'Higgins!"

He emigrated to Peru with his family. He had liberated his country at the cost of losing everything, even the right to live in it. Only the generosity of the Peruvians, who gave him a farm in Montalván, saved him from poverty. To prove that he still believed in the destiny of America, he again buckled on the old sword of Chacabuco and joined Simón Bolívar at Huancayo to help him chase out the last royalist forces.

O'Higgins died in 1842, at the age of sixty-four. His will directed that the salary still owed him be used to build a lighthouse and an astronomical observatory. Even at the end his mind turned back to Chile, for his last word was: "Magallanes." ● ● ●

rhythmic Colombians



Dressed in costumes typical of Colombian highlands, coasts, and plains, Conjunto Tejicondor members entertain in Hanover Square, New York

TEXTILE WORKERS' TROUPE GOES ON U. S. JAUNT

HILTON DANILO MESKUS

THE HABITUALLY businesslike atmosphere of the shipping and insurance district in downtown New York was suddenly shattered by a flourish of trumpets, guitars, flutes, and melodious voices singing unmistakably in Spanish. Surprised onlookers hanging out of the massive old office buildings that flank Hanover Square caught a glimpse of the Colombian flag, swirling multicolored skirts, baskets of flowers, and shuffling feet going through the suggestive steps of a *cumbia*. Board members and office workers of W. R. Grace and Company and casual strollers near the East River wharves were being treated to an authentic presentation of Colombian folk music, colorful trappings,

and rhythmic dances by the *Conjunto Tejicondor* from the city of Medellín.

This unique musical organization, composed of thirty-nine men and eleven women textile workers from the Fábrica de Tejidos El Cóndor, came to the United States to participate in the celebration of Pan American Week and of the tenth anniversary of the signing of the OAS Charter in Bogotá. Their trip was made possible through the combined efforts of the Colombian Government, private organizations there, and the Pan American Union. The exuberant troupe, which includes technicians, mechanics, weavers, finishers, dyers, and apprentices, ar-



Crowd collects in PAU lobby, attracted by lively folk music

rived in Washington aboard a special Colombian Air Force plane loaded with a ton and a half of costumes, coffee, and odd-looking musical instruments.

The *Conjunto Tejicondor* began some ten years ago when the noted composer Carlos Vico, now the group's leader, started to teach music classes for the factory workers. In 1954 the choreographer Agustin Jaramillo decided to make the students into a folklore group. He took away the chairs and music stands, changed the repertoire from foreign music to exclusively Colombian airs, abandoned the classical instruments, and dressed the performers in native rural costumes. They soon began to rediscover the value of the popular instruments and folk songs of their own land and people. Those with the most ability were put through long months of rehearsals until they were considered ready for the sophisticated audiences of Bogotá. Their debut at the capital's International Exposition that same year was a tremendous success. This was followed by programs on the national television network and shows in other Colombian cities. As the country's first permanent folklore troupe, *Tejicondor* encouraged the formation of other similar groups, which culminated in the establishment of an annual folk music and dance contest. It has repeatedly won top honors in this competition. Earlier this year, Jaramillo retired as artistic director, since, as he said, "There are

many important things to do and now this baby can walk alone."

During its U.S. tour—the first time it had been outside Colombia—the group whirled through a hectic week of song and dance, sight-seeing, and shopping in Washington and New York. Their shows, perhaps the first authentic presentations of their kind in the United States, included performances of the *bambuco*, Colombia's national dance; the *gallinacito*, or dance of the vultures; the *pasillo*, reputedly the first native Colombian dance to be admitted to elegant salons; the *manta* (literally, "blanket"), an Indian dance from the mountains; the *porro*, originally from the plains of Bolívar State and the lower Magdalena Valley; and the *cumbia*, a coastal dance of African origin in which the women usually carry lighted candles, the men wooden machetes.

In Washington, besides giving presentations at the Pan American Union, they performed to wild applause on the steps of the Capitol before distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; at Walter Reed Army Hospital; in Constitution Hall, during the annual national convention of the Daughters of the American Revolution; and in the Mayflower Hotel for a benefit to raise funds for a scholarship for a Latin American student. They drew attention wherever they went in their typical rural dress of various Colombian departments: for the men, white linen trousers, white shirts, red scarves, *ruanas* (short ponchos "to keep the mountain cold from my bones," as one of them told me), Panama hats, the tradi-

Carlos Vico (right) leads Medellín folklore performers in Pan American Union Hall of the Americas





Group serenades senators on Capitol steps

tional Antioquian *carriel* bags slung over their shoulders, hemp sandals, and machetes swaying from their hips; and for the girls, full, gaily-colored skirts, frilled blouses, shawls, and straw hats.

In New York, the group attracted another crowd by performing in the plaza in front of the United Nations Assembly Building and recorded a program for short-wave broadcast to the Colombian troops serving overseas under the UN flag. They were entertained in the UN Delegates' Dining Room and at Rockefeller Center, and toured Broadway after dark. One young man was so impressed by the Radio City Music Hall stage show that he said: "If I live to be a hundred, and never leave my town again, I'll still be able to talk about this."

All were delighted with the welcome they received and enjoyed the opportunity to learn at first hand, however briefly, about the United States. Awed by the highly organized and efficient traffic control, sanitation, and other public services, they were amazed to find an ash-tray on District Commissioner Robert E. McLaughlin's desk reminding him that "Next week we've got to get organized."

For most, however, the highlights of their trip were undoubtedly the shopping expeditions. One probably invested his life savings to buy a pair of shining trumpets for the group. I remember overhearing another chuckling to himself at the gigantic Seven Corners Shopping Center in suburban Virginia. This time, he told me gleefully, his wife could not ask him to exchange the purchase. In Herald Square, New York, though the group was convoyed by a bevy of Spanish-speaking saleswomen, one young lady caused her companions hours of distress by getting lost. Somehow her escort had lost track of her in the Thursday-evening nine-o'clock-closing-time rush. Where was she? Near midnight she was found weeping and shaken—on Macy's sixth floor. ♦ ♦ ♦



Circling girls carry lighted candles in cumbia, coastal Colombian dance of African origin



Ralph Robinson

Mr. HARWELL'S BINOCULARS

a short story by **ARMANDO S. PIRES**

illustrated by **RALPH ROBINSON**

OFTEN on my trips to and from the United States I had stopped at Port-of-Spain, but always I had cut my stay ashore to a minimum because of the humid tropical heat.

On my latest visit about a year ago, however, when a breeze made it at least seem cool, I decided to take a stroll around the town and perhaps buy some of the lovely handwork from India that I knew was available in Trinidad. I went alone, enjoying my bachelor freedom, since I particularly abhorred the company of the "sight-seeing" tourists who made up most of the ship's passenger list.

Someone had recommended Frederick Street for its shops, and I soon found myself there. The narrow sidewalk was jammed with humanity. It was not easy to window shop, for the crowd kept pushing me along in spite of myself, but suddenly my eye was caught by a display so intriguing that I knew I would have to stop there. It was a small store, but it seemed to carry every conceivable item of trade. There were cheap leather goods, used cameras, costume jewelry, all sorts of odds and ends in incredible disarray; yet somehow the general effect appealed to me. As I stood gazing at the display, I noticed a huge pair of binoculars, larger than any I had ever seen before and obviously quite old. They were not prominently displayed, but looked rather as if the shopkeeper had forgotten they were there. Dust lay thick on them. The longer I looked the more curious they seemed. Then I realized why they had struck me as unusual: they were elaborately adorned with mother-of-pearl, like opera glasses. On one side a tiny metal plate bore some wording that I could not make out.

There was only one thing to do: go in and inquire.

"Good morning, sir," said the elderly shopkeeper, with the typical accent of the British West Indies. We were alone in the store.

"Good morning," I replied. "Those binoculars you have in the window—could I see them, please?"

"Why, yes, sir." He hesitated, and when I asked if anything was wrong, he smiled and said: "You're not the first, sir, to inquire about them. But when I tell the story behind those glasses, everyone loses interest in them."

As he spoke, he walked along the counter toward the window, leaving me to digest that cryptic remark.

"Well—what's the story?" I asked, rather impatiently.

He had bent over to get them, and as he straightened up he told me: "They're quite old, really." He put the binoculars on the counter, without letting go of them. "As you will notice, sir," he went on, "this little plaque on the side says, 'Thos. A. Harwell & Son, London.' Have you perhaps heard of Harwell, sir?"

I confessed I had not.

"Well, sir, as I understand it, Mr. Harwell was quite well known as a manufacturer of optical instruments in England around 1880 or so, but his career was cut short by tragedy in his family. His only son and partner—Anthony was his name—died in a shooting accident, and soon afterward Mr. Harwell's wife also passed away. Poor Mr. Harwell is said to have lost his mind then, and during the next few years he made strange optical instruments that were apparently quite useless. Before the end of the century he died, they say, a horrible death after swallowing some nasty chemical or another."

The story was tragic, of course, but why it should discourage people from buying a beautiful antique piece I could not imagine. However, the shopkeeper went on:

"Very soon afterward, the name of Harwell was virtually forgotten. Meanwhile, my own grandparents had come here from England, and eventually my father opened this shop, which I, his only son, now own. A month or so before he died he gave me a meticulous inventory of everything in the shop, and he told me that one of the more curious items was these binoculars."

The old man paused and peered at me quizzically through his steel-rimmed spectacles. Presently he picked up the tale again:

"'They were made,' my father told me, 'by old man

ARMANDO S. PIRES was formerly an associate editor of AMERICAS, in charge of the Portuguese edition.

Harwell *after* he went insane. And I've been told, son, that some of the people who have owned these glasses at different times have either gone mad themselves or committed suicide.'"

He stopped again. I urged him to go on, and offered him an American cigarette. We both lighted up.

"My father didn't tell me, sir," he continued, "how he acquired the binoculars, and I never asked. He did say he couldn't bring himself to discard them, because they were so lovely. But he never dared look *through* them, and he made me promise I wouldn't either. 'If you can sell them,' he added, 'what's to stop you? But never fail to tell the whole story to any prospective buyer.'"

"But, really, how could they be any different from other binoculars?" I asked.

"I don't know, sir. But I've never broken that promise, possibly because—well, perhaps I *am* a bit superstitious and a little wary."

The whole thing had begun to sound like a fabrication to lure customers, but the binoculars were so handsome that I bought them on the spot. After all, I wasn't so much interested in them as an optical instrument.

Back on the ship, I put them in my trunk, along with a few bottles of Trinidad rum, and thought no more about it until I was settled in a hotel in Rio about a week later.

My hotel was on the Praia do Flamengo and my room on the seventh floor front. My first night there I carefully laid the binoculars on the window sill and knelt on the floor to take a close look at the surrounding rooftops and lighted windows.

I had some trouble adjusting the lenses; everything blurred at first. I got up, turned off the lights, and went back to my lookout. I kept turning the wheel until, with startling clarity, a brightly lighted window came into focus. "This is a good piece of work after all!" I thought. I raised my eyes from the binoculars, hoping to single out that window among the thousands before me. No luck.

So I looked through my Trinidad souvenir again. There was the window, the room. With a shudder I realized I was looking into my bedroom at home in Petrópolis: the bed, the bookcase, the seascape on the wall, the lamp.

As I knelt there, throbbing with an odd expectancy, a woman appeared near the bed. I began to perspire in my chilly room (I had opened the window to get a clearer view). I rubbed my eyes, pressed my knuckles against them, hard. I looked again. It was my mother—speaking to someone outside my range of vision. I waited breathlessly, and soon my sister was there too—my sister Ada, who had died in childbirth ten years before. The binoculars made them look like actors on a ten-inch television screen. They were laughing at some private joke, and my mother held a corner of her apron in her right hand—such a typical gesture! She always used to do that when she laughed. Those two dear women, long since dead, were there before me; my past had reappeared in a maddeningly tantalizing flash. I began to doubt my sanity. I closed my eyes, sat on the floor. My mind was

in such turmoil that I wanted to run from the room, leaving the binoculars and everything else behind.

Taking a hefty swig of rum, I looked at myself in the mirror. A ghastly pale image looked back. My first thought was to call a doctor, but what could I tell him? I decided on a good night's sleep instead.

Resisting the urge to look through the binoculars again, I undressed, lay down, and fell asleep almost immediately. I had left a call for seven the next morning. When the phone rang, I sat bolt upright, and instantly remembered the binoculars. I rushed to the window sill, knelt, and peered through them. All I could see this time, however, was Rio in 1957—a dismal, gray Rio at that. No matter how much I fiddled with the wheel, I could not focus clearly. I put the binoculars in a drawer.

Trying to convince myself it had all been a bad dream, I shaved and dressed, ate a big breakfast, and went about my business. Though I felt lighthearted, I could not bring myself to talk about my experience the night before with anyone.

The day was busy, and it passed quickly. I did not return to the hotel until nearly midnight. After I had got ready for bed, I took out the binoculars. Once more I knelt by the window, my heart pounding. For a minute, nothing. I twirled the wheel, and, as before, my room in Petrópolis flashed into focus. I felt sick, but I knew I would spend the rest of the night by the window.

Through those binoculars I watched my past unfolding before me: high-school classrooms, my first date, a dance, a special girl, all the rest of it. I was overwhelmed by a sense of foreboding, an ugly presentiment. At dawn the images began to fade, then disappeared. Sleep was out of the question. Automatically, I dressed and left the room. I made up my mind to see a doctor.

A secretary at the office made an appointment with a Dr. Souza for five o'clock that afternoon. I talked to him at length, but could not bring myself to mention what had happened the past couple of nights.

"Don't worry too much about business—or anything else," he cautioned me. "You're obviously rather tense. Try to ease up a little. A mild sedative may help." I had the prescription filled on my way back to the hotel, and promised myself that after dinner I would read a good, gripping mystery and stay away from the window.

But as soon as I was back in the room, I knew I had to look again. Trying to fight the obsession, I decided to look through the wrong end of the binoculars. Crouched by the window in the dark room, I found it even more difficult to focus sharply with the glasses reversed. Finally something began to take shape. At first, I was relieved—the image, smaller of course, seemed totally unrelated to my life. It was a beach scene, bleak and wintry, that I never recalled having seen before. Weird white birds perched on dark-gray, dirty rocks jutting out over the ocean. I could almost hear the crashing breakers beat a wild, nightmarish rhythm. Some of the birds rose in flight over a stretch of yellowish sand. The sea had washed up an odd-shaped, motionless something. As I focused the binoculars more carefully, I saw, bloated and rotting, my own dead body. ♦ ♦ ♦

duels in verse

RURAL BRAZILIAN TROUBADOURS

MANUEL DIÉGUES JÚNIOR

THE STORY is told that in 1870 Inácio da Catingueira and Francisco Romano de Teixeira held a poetry challenge in the market place of Patos, Paraíba State, during which they sang for eight days and nights in a row. This is the most famous such competition on record. So famous and also so unlikely that many doubt whether it was ever held at all.

Still, the folk poet-singers of the Brazilian Northeast are like that: men who improvise on the spur of the moment, who do not measure time, who sing songs already written or make up their own, who spend years and years singing. They are rustic men, leading a country life, doing rural chores, and filling their spare time with song. Others, though not many, make their sole living from their performances, wandering about, singing in one place today, taking up a challenge somewhere else tomorrow. Manuel Neném (i.e., "Baby," actually Manuel Floriano Ferreira) of Alagoas, who was a hoe man, thus described his life, which by extension is that of all the singers:

*Criei-me sem pai nem mãe
No meio deste sertão,
Andando de deus em deus;
Fui criado, meu patrão,
Com o sol e com a chuva,
Como as ramas de algodão.*

I grew up without father or mother
In the middle of these backlands,
Wandering from here to there;
I was brought up, boss,
By the sun and the rain,
Like branches of cotton.

The troubadour is, of course, a universal figure, dating from ancient times. The medieval jongleur, the Celtic bard, the minstrels of other ages who figure in so many histories of literature have modern counterparts elsewhere in America—in Argentina (the *payador* or improviser is enshrined in the celebrated *Martín Fierro*), in Chile, in Mexico, in Uruguay, in Venezuela. In Brazil itself, there are a certain number outside the Northeast, especially since the hard life and periodic droughts of that region began forcing its natives to migrate. The custom has taken hold even in Rio, for example, where most construction laborers are Northeasterners.

Like the singers he writes about, MANUEL DIÉGUES JÚNIOR is a Northeasterner—from Alagoas State. He is a professor of sociology at the Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro and of ethnology and Brazilian ethnography at Santa Úrsula College.



Wood carving of famous oldtime singer by Antônio Santeiro, Natal folk sculptor

What is remarkable in these backwoods rhapsodists is the vivacity, the wit, the rich imagery of their improvisations. As a rule they do not—nor do they like to—sing alone; they find challenges more fun, and their talents are stimulated by the rivalry. This point was made by Anselmo Vieira de Souza of Ceará, whom Leonardo Mota

called the best singer he had ever heard, in the following verses:

<i>Não tem outro cantadô</i>	I have no other singer
<i>Pra me ajudá um tiquim...</i>	To help me a bit.
<i>O cantá de dois é bom,</i>	Singing in twos is good,
<i>O ruim é cantá sozim;</i>	The bad thing is singing alone;
<i>A gente, andando de dois,</i>	People walking by twos
<i>Encurta mais os camim...</i>	Make journeys shorter.

When they do sing by themselves, it is generally traditional ballads or old tales they themselves have put into verse—the Maiden Theodora, the Twelve French Peers, and so forth—or else they repeat famous singing sessions, describe backwoods existence, talk of their own lives.

But the challenge brings the singer's supreme moment. Besides the truly celebrated contest between Inácio da Catingueira and Francisco Romano cited above, there have been others of note, afterward published in cheap pamphlets: between Bernardo Nogueira and Preto Limão, between Zé Pretinho de Tucum and the blind Aderaldo, between Serrador and Carneiro, between João Martins and Raimundo Pelado. What counts in one of these competitions is presence of mind, demonstrated by the witty riposte. The Pernambuco singer Azulão (Sebastião Cândido dos Santos), who at the time Leonardo Mota collected his verses exulted in all the vainglory of his thirty years, thus praised his own skill at extemporizing:

*Quando me faltá repente,
Falta turbarão no má...
Falta padre nas igreja,
Falta santo nos artá...
Falta frade nos convento,
E sêca no Ceará.*

When I have no comeback,
There will be no sharks in the sea,
There will be no priests in the churches,
There will be no saints on the altars,
There will be no monks in the convents,
Nor drought in Ceará.

The challenge used to be based on questions and answers, riddles, or disconcerting remarks—this last the technique used by Aderaldo to defeat Zé Pretinho. Today the verses exchanged deal with self-glorification, praise of the adversary or others, comments on incidents of the occasion or on the people present; insults are traded also, each denying the other's qualities or pointing out his defects. But on two points the contestants are strict: they will not insult their adversaries' families, and they are incapable of language that is less than decorous.

The singers accompany themselves on the fiddle or on the *viola*, a kind of guitar with a melancholy, piercing tone, brought to Brazil centuries ago from Portugal. Formerly the tambourine was also much used—it was the instrument of the great Catingueira. In a challenge, between the end of one singer's verses and the start of his opponent's, the two play a short musical passage called a *baião* or *rojão*.

Many singers, especially the old-timers, are illiterate or at best can just about spell their way through a sentence. But nowadays, with the spread of schooling, their



Two present-day stars: Manuel Neném (left) and Joaquim Vitorino

number is diminishing. Manuel Neném thus confessed to his ignorance of the alphabet, revealing at the same time his gift for beautiful imagery and spontaneity:

<i>Sou cantador atrazado</i>	I am a backward singer
<i>E meus erros ninguém note;</i>	And may no one notice my mistakes;
<i>Eu só canto porque Deus</i>	I only sing because God
<i>Foi quem me deu êste dote;</i>	Was the one who gave me this gift;
<i>Mas eu só conheço um O</i>	But I only know the O
<i>Devido à boca de um pote.</i>	Because of the mouth of a pot.

Those who read have picked up a little knowledge of mythology, sacred history, history of civilization, geography, or grammar from cheap books bought in the markets. In challenges, they confound their adversaries with references to biblical passages, mythological figures, historical events. Since whatever the illiterates may know about these subjects is only what they have been told or had read to them, they cannot resort to this tactic; their finest talent is quick wit, their forte the impromptu comment on what is going on at the moment.

I have transcribed below the opening of a competition between Lourival Batista and Severino Pinto, which reveals the participants' powers of subtle observation and irony. The challenge took place at a Congress of Singers held in 1950 in Pernambuco. Lourival began with these verses:

<i>A cantoria vai boa</i>	The songfest goes well
<i>E os versos são colossais.</i>	And the verses are colossal.

At that moment a photographer knelt down close to Pinto, and Lourival noticed him:

<i>Pinto, aí da tua banda</i>	Pinto, there beside you
<i>Acocorou-se um rapaz,</i>	A youth squatted down,
<i>Assim nessa posição</i>	And from his position
<i>Eu nem sei que é que êle faz.</i>	I can't tell what he's doing.

Severino Pinto then took it up:

*Acocorou-se o rapaz,
Começou a se bolir,
Focou na cara da gente
E eu vi a luz explodir.
Pensei até que era um bicho
Que me queria engolir.*

The youth squatted down,
He began to mess around,
He focused on my face
And I saw the light explode.
I even thought it was an animal
That wanted to eat me up.

To which Lourival added:

*Eu não posso distinguir
Se é ele da praça ou da aldeia,
Porém quando acocorou-se
Meu sangue subiu na veia.
Que a foto pode ser boa
Mas a posição foi feia.*

I can't make out
Whether he's from the square or
from the village,
Yet when he squatted down
The blood leaped in my veins.
The picture may be good
But the posture was ugly.

Such congresses take place irregularly, under varying auspices, here and there in the Northeast. The one in Pernambuco was organized by the poet Rogaciano Leite with the help of many singers. Another, held in Salvador, Bahia State, in 1955, was devoted to discussion of the singers' problems and establishment of an association with headquarters and an official organ.

The terminology of this kind of poetry is rather unusual. A stanza is called a "verse," the verse itself a "line" or a "foot," and the body of a singer's poems a "work"; thus, a man's sextains will be collected as "a six-footed work." The various poetic forms are called "rules"; among them are the *mourão* (literally, "stake"), the *galope* ("gallop"), the *martelo* ("hammer"), the *parcela* ("parcel"), the *sextilha* (sextain, the form used in all the verses quoted so far), the *décima* (decastich), the *gabinete* ("cabinet") or *carretilha* ("falling star"), the

martelo agalopado ("galloping hammer"), the *quadrão* (a local eight-line form), the *ligeira* ("lasso"), the *dez pés em quadrão* (ten feet in a *quadrão*), and the *seis por nove* (six by nine). The last three are falling into disuse, and recently a new form has appeared, called *galope à beira mar* ("sea-side gallop").

The *parcela* is a stanza of ten (or sometimes eight) five-syllable lines. It is a classic Portuguese form, the ten-line version used by Camões in *Endeixas a uma Cativeira*, the eight-line by the nineteenth-century Brazilian poet Gonçalves Dias in *Canção do Tamôio*. The following example was employed by Raimundo Pelado against Manuel Campina:

*Eu como cantor
Não tenho inimigo
E só canto contigo
Pra fazer favor.
Mas tenho rancor
De ver tua raça
Porque onde passa
E só pabulando
E o povo mangando
Da tua desgraça.*

I as a singer
Have no enemies
And I only sing with you
To do you a favor.
But I do resent
Seeing your kind
For wherever you go
It is only boasting
And people scoffing
At your misfortune.

A *quadrão* is a stanza of eight seven-syllable lines, always ending with the word *quadrão* and rhyming AAABCCCB. In the *ligeira*, one competitor sings two verses and a refrain of "Ai, dá, dá," and the other repeats the "Ai" and sings two more verses; each must complete the meaning of the sentence or reply to his adversary's. In the popular *mourão*, one singer sings two verses, the second two more, then the first sings three, and so on. The earlier custom was to sing it in sextains,

Singers ready for a challenge at Boa Sorte sugar plantation in Alagoas State



as can be seen in this snatch from the Catingueira-Romano challenge, which also displays the former's style of wit:

CATINGUEIRA: *Seu Romano, estão dizendo* Romano, they're saying
Que nós não cantamos bem. That we don't sing well.

ROMANO: *Pra cantar igual a nós* To sing as well as we
Aqui não vejo ninguém. I see no one here.

CATINGUEIRA: *E o diabo que disse isto* And the devil who said that
É o pior que aqui tem! Is the worst one here!

Some authors consider the *martelo* and the *martelo agalopado* to be the same form, but actually they are different. The *martelo* symbolizes the tool it is named after; its rhythm recalls the blows of a hammer. (The *dez pés em quadrão*, ten lines of seven syllables each rhyming ABBAACCDDC, is considered by Leonardo Mota and some others to be a form of *martelo*.) The *martelo agalopado* has ten ten-syllable lines, whence it is sometimes called the *martelo em dez pés*, rhyming ABBAACCAAC. A difficult and beautiful form, it is nowadays a major weapon in challenges, together with the *sextilha*, the *parcela*, and the *mourão*. Its principal use is in the "fanfarronade"—that is, in singing one's own praises. For example, this admirable one of Manuel Neném's:

*Quando eu canto o martelo as pedras estala,
Se engrossa o firmamento, a lua geme,
Fica o mundo amarelo, cor de creme,
As marés se agita, o mar se abala.
Bacharel na tribuna perde a fala,
Todo povo que vê fica parado,
Pregador no sermão fica calado
Para ouvir meu sermão de cantoria.
E a noite realça igual ao dia
Eu cantando o martelo agalopado.*

When I sing the *martelo* the stones clap,
The heavens swell, the moon groans,
The world turns yellow, the color of cream,
The tides quiver, the sea trembles.
The lawyer in court forgets his case,
All who look on are paralyzed,
The preacher is silenced in the middle of his sermon,
To hear my sermon of song.
And the night shines like day
When I sing the *martelo agalopado*.

Another example of the *martelo agalopado* is the following exchange of bravado between Dimas Batista and Domingos Fonseca, who were judged the best singers at the above-mentioned Pernambuco Congress. After various references to mythology, they "complimented" each other in these magnificent stanzas:

DIMAS: *Cantador desta tua qualidade
Tenho visto dez, doze, numa feira,
Maltratando os colegas de "primeira",
Enganando e explorando a humanidade,
Namorando mocinhas com maldade,
Pra depois falar mal da filha alheia.
Esses cabras merecem levar peia
Pra deixarem de ser tão imorais...
Eu nem sei a polícia o que é que faz
Que não mete essa corja na cadeia.*

Singers like you
I've seen by tens, dozens, in a market
Mistreating your betters,
Cheating and exploiting humanity,
Deceiving young girls,
Later to speak ill of someone else's daughter.
Such fellows should be punished
So they'll stop being so immoral.
I don't know what the police are up to
That they don't clap this rabble in jail.

DOMINGOS: *Retira-te daqui, saco de ofensa,
Boca vil que só diz barbaridade,
Fuxico de subúrbio de cidade,
Fastio de começo do doença.
Criminoso que joga da sentença,
Traícoiro assaltante de caminho.
Jogador de pilhéria no vizinho
Eu não sou o canalha que tu és.
No lugar que eu, cantando, ponho os pés
Tu não podes botar nem o focinho.*

Get out of here, sack of offensiveness,
Loudmouth who says nothing but vulgarities,
Shantytown gossip.
Symptom of a disease.
Criminal fleeing from his sentence,
Treacherous highwayman.
Player of practical jokes on your neighbor,
I'm not the rabble you are.
In the place where I, singing, set my feet
You can't even stick your snout.

But these natural-born poets are not merely braggarts, formidable punsters, or masters of the embarrassing phrase. They are also lyrists of rare power, some of whom become almost transfigured as they pour out their feelings in poetry. From one of these, the blind Otávio, I once heard this quatrain:

<i>Tudo que é verde seca</i>	All that is green dries up
<i>Com o rigor de verão;</i>	With the heat of summer;
<i>Com a chuva tudo renova</i>	With the rain everything renews itself
<i>Só a mocidade não.</i>	Only youth does not.

Another of this quality is Manuel Neném, who can transform even the "fanfarronade" into pure lyricism. To another man's verse, he replied:

<i>Eu ergo o meu pensamento,</i>	I lift my thoughts,
<i>O meu sentido descobre,</i>	My intuition is aroused,
<i>Meu conhecimento sobe,</i>	My wisdom rises
<i>Por cima do firmamento;</i>	Above the heavens;
<i>Segue nas asas do vento,</i>	It travels on the wings of the wind,
<i>Pelos espaços voando,</i>	Flying through space,
<i>As frases se derramando,</i>	My phrases scattering,
<i>O vento a passar sorrindo,</i>	The wind passing by smiling,
<i>Quando a tarde vêm caindo</i>	When the evening falls
<i>Minhas rimas vêm chegando.</i>	My rhymes come.

<i>Às vezes, juntinho a um galho</i>	Sometimes, beside a branch
<i>Das roseiras de um jardim,</i>	Of the rosebushes in a garden,
<i>As rimas se chegam a mim,</i>	Rhymes come to me,
<i>Como gotas de orvalho.</i>	Like drops of dew.
<i>Eu cultivo o meu trabalho</i>	I work at my job
<i>Nele vou me habilitando</i>	I'm getting skillful at it
<i>Vêzes sorrindo e cantando,</i>	Sometimes smiling and singing,
<i>Outras cantando e sorrindo,</i>	Other times singing and smiling,
<i>Quando a tarde vêm caindo,</i>	When the evening falls,
<i>Minhas rimas vêm chegando.</i>	My rhymes come.

OAS

FOTO FLASHES



Dr. Carlos Sanz de Santamaría, Foreign Minister of Colombia, delivered the principal address at the protocolary meeting of the OAS Council commemorating the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Organization's Charter in Bogotá. Excerpts from his speech appear in "On the Economic Front," page 38.



Four other Latin American artists currently in the United States joined OAS Secretary General José A. Mora in congratulating Venezuelan painter Oswaldo Vigas at the opening of his one-man show at the Pan American Union. From left: Humberto Jaime of Venezuela, Vigas, Dr. Mora, José Luis Cuevas of Mexico, Jorge Camacho of Cuba, and Enrique Grau of Colombia.



For Coffee Day, proclaimed during Pan American Week in recognition of the commodity's major role in inter-American trade, Senator Theodore F. Green, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, received a sample from Doris Gil Santamaría, Miss Colombia (left), and Luz Marina Zuluaga, Miss Caldas, who represents one of Colombia's largest coffee-producing departments.



Exotic orchids, shown here adorning the fountain, were flown to Washington from Colombia through the courtesy of the garden clubs of Bogotá, Manizales, and Medellín to highlight floral decorations in the PAU patio for Pan American Week activities.



MIGHTY PENS

"QUITE A FEW people thought the first Meeting of Writers held in Chile . . . would be more of a clash than a meeting, but the five days were given over to high-level discussions . . ." Emilio Filippi reports in *Ercilla*, a weekly magazine published in Santiago. "At the Meeting there were twenty-seven Chilean writers of every inclination and school, invited . . . by the University of Concepción, which paid the entire bill. Each guest was allotted twenty thousand pesos [about twenty-two U.S. dollars], in addition to air-travel and hotel expenses. Carlos León and Guillermo Atías chose not to fly—Atías confessed to being afraid, and León said he had already been baptized in heaven, 'in spite of being decidedly radical.'"

"Lodgings were not assigned on the basis of similar literary preferences. As a matter of fact, Gonzalo Rojas, Juan Loveluck, and Alfredo Lefevre—who conceived the idea for the Meeting—deliberately mixed writers with diametrically opposed views. . . . In the Hotel Ritz two unbending Catholics, José Manuel Vergara and Fernando Debesa, and a recognized leftist, Armando Cassigoli, got along fine together. . . ."

"Fernando Alegría did nothing to allay the fear that the Meeting might turn into a clash when he put all Chilean writers on the spot in his opening address—'Mid-century Resolution'—in which he urged poets, critics, novelists, and essayists alike to revitalize the national literature. . . ."

"Enrique Lafourcade—who wrote *Pena de Muerte* (Death Penalty)—had also created some tension when at a

round-table organizational discussion the day before the first session he proposed that the speakers be listed in reverse alphabetical order. The rest disagreed and demanded conventional procedure, starting with *A*. Almost immediately, however, they realized that Lafourcade was just being arbitrary . . . , since *L* is in the middle of the alphabet either way.

"Later the same day Lafourcade came up with some declarations directed at 'the South.' Referring to the literary life of Concepción, he pointed out that the only writer there from Concepción was Daniel Belmar—who wrote *Coirón*—and that the scarcity was probably due to the rain. . . . The proud representatives of Concepción were annoyed and let him know it. A writer from Tomé sent him a fuming letter demanding an explanation. Only after four days did Lafourcade condescend to explain that it had been a joke and that if he had said there were no writers from Concepción, it was because he thought of them all as

Chilean writers. He mentioned, besides Belmar, Gonzalo Rojas, Diego Dublé Urrutia, Diego Muñoz, and others. . . .

"Humberto Díaz Casanueva, who had to leave for Rome to take over his job as First Secretary of the Chilean Embassy there, was allowed to jump the alphabetical order and read his work on 'The Generation of 1920,' which was criticized by the young writers, especially Miguel Arteché. Before departing, Díaz Casanueva also read a poem—'Requiem'—which he had written fourteen years before on the death of his mother. He had never before gathered the courage to read it in public, and it received a tremendous ovation.

"Women were conspicuous by their absence. None had been invited, but two poetesses, Eliana Godoy and Ximena Sepúlveda, did attend as spectators. . . ."

"According to the rules, no interruption or interpolation was to last more than five minutes. At one session, after several speakers had carefully kept within the time limit, Luis Oyarzún asked that he be allowed six minutes. He spoke for sixteen. The next day, however, when Oyarzún was chairman, he kept the others strictly within bounds.

"Mario Osses frequently made lengthy interpolations. At the opening session, after speaking for some time, he was asked to cut it short. Indignantly, he addressed the chair: 'I can't be any more brief. That would take hours.' In later sessions, whenever he asked for the floor, a murmur would run through the gathering. Iruled, he once announced: 'Don't worry. I'm



—By Jaguar, in *Manchete*, Rio de Janeiro

going to say only a few words.'

"... Nicanor Parra drew one of the noisiest ovations when he read '*La Cueva Larga* [The Long Cueva],' a popular poem that refers to intimate feminine garments. . . . Parra also presented an essay on a group of 'diurnal' poets who struck out against the hermetic, nocturnal poetry and sought simplicity and clarity. . . . He began by mentioning an anthology that included works by Luis Oyarzún, Jorge Millas, Omar Cerda, Victoriano Vicario, Hernán Cañas, Alberto Baeza Flores, Oscar Castro, and Parra himself. He said:

"What sort of fellows were the poets Tomás Lago put in his anthology? It is not difficult to describe them. Politically, we were mostly apolitical, or more exactly, non-militant leftists. As for religion, we were not Catholic; theology did not bother us. . . . I was inclined toward Oriental philosophy, for which even my closest friends, Oyarzún and Millas, held me in suspicion. Oyarzún believed in the Cyclops, and Millas, despite his solid academic background, let himself be dazzled by an itinerant philosopher . . . who avowed that man should find his inspiration for social behavior in the domestic animals. . . .

"To survive we had to absorb the teachings of Freud, the main component of Mandrake surrealism. But the poets of that school had to yield us a little ground too. It is not merely by chance that Gonzalo Rojas and I are still actively interested in the processes of poetic creation. Gonzalo gave me the key to the temple of black poetry, but I stirred in him the fire of white poetry. . . .

"We cannot boast of having won the battle. The antipoem is, after all, nothing but the traditional poem enriched with *criollo* surrealism—or whatever you choose to call it—and should be analyzed from the psychological and social viewpoint of our country and our continent, so that it can be considered a true poetic ideal. It has yet to be proved that the child of the marriage of day and night . . . is not a sort of poetic dawning."

"Parra's reference to the Mandrake group turned out to be the subject of the contribution made by the poet Braulio Arenas the second day of the

Meeting. He spoke of Jorge Cáceres, Gonzalo Rojas, Fernando Onfray, and himself, who classified themselves as surrealists. . . . Parra immediately asked what were the basic principles of the Mandrake group, which Arenas did not answer directly. Humberto Díaz Casanueva came to Arenas' assistance, accused Parra of having phrased the question badly, and launched into a brilliant explanation of surrealism. Parra then rose from his seat and quietly pointed out: 'My question was not badly phrased, since you have answered it for me.'

"However, all was not agreement



—Boletín de Gerencia Administrativa, San Juan, Puerto Rico

between Arenas and Díaz Casanueva. When the Mandrake poet referred to Sartre as a 'clown in three acts,' Díaz Casanueva shot back: 'Not at all. Sartre is a great dramatist, a great writer, and a great philosopher.'

"The next-to-the-last day of the Meeting of Writers, Enrique Lafourcade proposed a vote of confidence for all writers living under tyranny, which did not pass. However, when news came of the downfall of Marcos Pérez Jiménez in Venezuela, Gonzalo Rojas, Volodia Teitelboim, and Leopoldo Castedo took the floor to offer their congratulations, and it was agreed to send a greeting to Venezuelan intellectuals. Whereupon Lafourcade remarked: 'Fine, gentlemen! I had begun to think I was at a meeting of teachers of Spanish. Now I see that I am among true writers!'"

HURRICANES AU JUS

THE COLOMBIAN poet and journalist Jorge Artel is no stranger to AMERICAS' readers. His piquant essays are now appearing regularly in *Vida Universitaria*, a weekly paper published in Monterrey, Mexico, under the auspices of the Nuevo León University Association. In the following article, he marvels at "a Miami enterprise that has announced the construction of a hurricane-proof tourist hotel, where guests will be able to watch, at no risk, these dramatic and perilous storms.

"To serve hurricanes *au jus* is a real stroke of imaginative genius. The man who thought of it is more than a shrewd businessman; he is a poet in every sense of the word. Only a highly sensitive person could convert northers and cyclones into tourist attractions.

"Till now cities on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts have sold the world music, dances, smelly fortresses and sentry boxes, and endless landscapes. Veracruz has its strong individuality; an elaborate castle, San Juan de Ulúa . . . ; the Mocambo; the Villa del Mar. In Tampico . . . the traveler is treated to extraordinary picturesqueness and excellent seafood restaurants.

"Havana, whose main product is the rumba, has swank cabarets and roving musicians who sling their guitars over their shoulders like rifles and set out to wage the guerrilla warfare of folk music. . . . They play tunes that are 'made in Cuba' especially for tourists and that—according to Eladio Secades—"make a short stop in your stomach before reaching your heart."

". . . The Dominican Republic has its ruins, its cathedral, Columbus' tomb, the merengue. . . . Haiti has voodoo, the Citadel, the romantic history of its Negro heroes. The Lesser Antilles have given us calypso and contraband clothing.

"Cartagena can point with pride to St. Peter Claver's tomb, his cell, and his hair shirt; the San Felipe de Barajas Cathedral with its fabulous acoustics; President Rafael Núñez's home. Puerto Rico has folk songs and dances; the governor's mansion; Aguadilla Bay and its splendid beaches that are unequaled anywhere in the West Indies. . . .

"Settlers in Tampico, Veracruz, or

Puerto Rico never dreamed that the fearsome hurricanes . . . would one day cease to be cause for panic and become instead gala entertainment. At least, for tourists in Miami. . . Elsewhere, residents take precautions against the turbulent storms . . . but imaginative North Americans are exhibiting them much as they would trained lions or tigers. . . From now on hurricanes will probably be listed in Miami tourist guides. . . The whole venture will undoubtedly turn out to be highly profitable. Times have certainly changed: they who sow the wind reap not the whirlwind but dollars."

THE SKYSCRAPER NEXT DOOR

WHEN LUIS CABRERA, an outstanding man of letters in Mexico, wants to do battle in print, he uses the pseudonym Blas Urrea, which is well known over the Hemisphere. Under this name he broaches "the most important problem Mexico must face in its relations with the United States," in the monthly Argentine magazine *Yapecú*:

"My house is small, but it is mine.

"Understandably, I was dismayed to find an immense skyscraper going up right next door. Every time I gazed up at the dizzying height I was terrified that the enormous steel skeleton might fall on my house.

"For three months I had nightmares about the snorting machine that operated the cranes, and every time the huge pile driver struck a blow I felt it in my chest. . . Each thump seemed like an earthquake that shook the foundations of my poor little house. Day and night I have had to put up with the incessant racket of three shifts of riveters machine-gunning the steel girders.

"But this phase of the operation is passing. What worries me now is that the doors in my house won't close. Window panes shatter without being touched, and the frames are becoming rhomboids instead of rectangles. Water pipes in the kitchen and bathroom have broken, and there are cracks in the walls that look like a graph of the rising cost of living. . . In short, my house has become a disaster area. My house is small, but it is mine; and it grieves me to see it fall apart. . .

"The other day I finally got a chance to speak with the head engineer . . . , a big, tall Yankee whose fractured Spanish was swathed in pipe smoke.

"Don't worry," he said to me, condescendingly. . . "When our building settles, I'll send a master mason to repair the cracks in your house."

"But it's more than a matter of a few chinks to be filled in. The whole house is crumbling."

"All right, we'll see afterward what has to be done, and do it. The Company . . . has enough money to cover the necessary repairs."

"But my house is collapsing, and I can't live in it now. Isn't The Company obligated to pay for the damage?"

"Yes, if you can prove that it was caused by our carelessness. But we can show that we have taken every precaution to protect neighboring buildings, and if you sue us, you'll lose the case."

"The prospect of a law suit . . . with 'The Company' was more appalling than the loathsome skyscraper, so I held my tongue.

"Why don't you sell us your little house?" the engineer asked. "The Company can pay cash."

"I understood then exactly what my neighbor The Company wanted. Years ago I had difficulty with the man who at that time owned the property. We took our problem to court, and I was forced to sell him a piece of my land for a song. But to sell my house now!

TOTO EL ACOLITO

1.



2.



3.



4.



Toto the acolyte.—Unión, Mexico City

My house is small, but it is mine. And it grieves me to get rid of it.

"But I know it would be impossible for me to obtain justice, since no judge would make The Company rebuild my house and guarantee it against further disintegration. There are only two practical solutions: either I sell my little house to The Company, or I accept a loan, which will put me in debt for the rest of my life, and rebuild it myself.

"The moral? This problem of mine is multiplied a hundredfold in Mexico City, and a thousandfold in the country as a whole. . . . The Mexican economy is a small adobe house, and the immense skyscraper next door is the U.S. economy. Will we find justice in the court of the United Nations? Will we be allowed to live in peace and develop by our own efforts? Will we be able to maintain control of our natural resources? Will we be the masters of our own future? Or will we have to go deep into debt in order to build another Yankee-type skyscraper, which we neither need nor can afford?"

LOVER, COME BACK

A WRY VIGNETTE, by Fernando Sabino, in the popular Brazilian weekly magazine *Manchete* recounts one woman's folly:

"He couldn't so much as cross a street without her worrying. If he mentioned that he had met an acquaintance, a woman, she was plagued with doubts. . . . Even his silences at home . . . tormented her. What could he be thinking about? Why did he sigh when he lay down on the sofa after dinner? Perhaps he hadn't liked the dessert? Or maybe he didn't like her new hair-do?

"If you want me to change it, I'll fix it the way it was before."

"What?" he asked, noticing the difference for the first time. Quiet and absent-minded by nature, he was annoyed by her fretfulness, and he began to spend less time at home. All the while, however, everyone talked about what a happy couple they were, how their marriage was just one long honeymoon. She was distressed by his prolonged absences.

"You're going out?" she would ask apprehensively when he picked up his jacket after dinner.



—Mundo Uruguayo, Montevideo

"Only to take a short walk."

"But you just got home."

"I'm going to meet a friend, to chat a while."

"Why don't you bring your friend here?"

"He left without further conversation. One night she put her foot down: 'I don't want you to go out.'"

"Why not?" he asked in surprise.

"Because every night it's the same thing, and I can't stand any more!" she burst out, beginning to cry. "I can't take it, I miss you so terribly."

"What foolishness," he said, as he tried to calm her with a shy, affectionate gesture. "I just take a short walk, have a cup of coffee, then come home. Nothing else."

"I don't want you to," she persisted. "Don't go out this evening."

"He smiled, shrugged, and walked toward the door. She stopped him.

"If that's how it is, I'm going too."

"But you aren't dressed to go out. That'll take time—I'll be back in a few minutes."

"As a reply she turned the key in the lock and withdrew it. 'In that case, you're not going either.'"

"Give me that key," he said, trembling with rage.

"She turned her back, victorious, and lay down on the sofa.

"Look," he persisted, trying to hold his temper. "If you don't open this door, I'm leaving and never coming back, understand?"

"I won't. I'd just like to see you leave me."

"Ah, you'd like to see it?" And he turned, walked straight to the window, climbed up on the sill. He gave her one last look, waved good-by, and jumped into the darkness. She screamed and lunged toward the window. . . . She caught sight of him as he slowly got to his feet and limped around the corner. . . .

"Twenty-five years went by, and she had no news of him. Since he did not

come back—and she knew in her heart that he would not—she went into deep mourning and never again left the house. She grew old there, all alone in that house, and refused to change anything, to move his belongings. Her nieces and nephews visited her: 'Auntie, why live here by yourself, why not live with us?'

"I want him to find me here when he returns."

"But her friends and relatives agreed that he had always been a little peculiar and withdrawn, that he would never come back. . . .

"One day she had word of him. A vague bit of news, but news all the same. Someone from Rio Grande do Sul casually mentioned a rancher of the same name . . . who had gone to Uruguay, married, had children, lost his wife, and finally bought a cattle ranch near the border, where he had lived for years. Immediately she began to write secret letters to anyone in that area who could give her more information, and soon she was plotting a way to see him again. She wrote directly to him; he did not reply. She wrote again; she sent cards on their wedding anniversary, at Christmas. One day an answer came—a few brief lines, but friendly. They exchanged more letters, and finally he agreed to return.

"And he did—quiet, older, dragging the leg he had broken in the leap from the window twenty-five years before. He moved in as if nothing had ever happened. She got all dressed up to receive him, and they both discreetly tried to ignore the ravages of time. At first she was respectfully silent, trying to win his affection by not asking questions about his long absence. Two months passed. Then one day, out of the blue, the first question came: 'Was she pretty?'

"She who?" The man emerged from his silence, his curiosity aroused.

"Your wife. I found out you had married, had children, and been left a widower."

"He made no reply. But there were more and more questions, until one day, without a word, he left the house (by the door) and never came back. She has again put on her widow's weeds, to keep the long vigil—stubbornly and in vain."

ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT

A COLOMBIAN VIEW

Colombian Foreign Minister Carlos Sanz de Santamaria, addressing a protocolary meeting of the OAS Council to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the OAS Charter, summed up the basic economic problems confronting Latin America, especially in regard to commodity prices. His statement attracted attention both in the United States and abroad. After describing the American nations' cooperative efforts in political and defense matters, he declared: "But the political union should be followed by a detailed study of economic matters—which vary from country to country—to make the Americas a unit and to seek a reasonable balance of wealth among their peoples. Improvement in the Latin American standard of living and the solution of our economic and financial difficulties are as important to the major powers as to our nations. We shall be the great consumers of the future when the purchasing power of our products permits.

"In the case of most [Latin American countries], and without any question in that of Colombia, their currencies in practice represent only the international purchasing power of one or a few natural products, and their economies are affected by the ups and downs of the prices of those commodities in the international market....A country whose domestic economy is dependent on the foreign purchasing power of copper, tin, or coffee, to cite only a few examples, can undergo a complete economic upheaval as a result of abundant crops or special market conditions....

"In our rural areas, the farm worker's wage varies from forty cents to a dollar for eight hours' work. The fruit of his labors is exchanged for goods manufactured in countries where the hourly wage is five or ten times what he earns

in a day. Nevertheless, in some quarters it is thought that coffee enjoys a fair and remunerative price. The same thing applies to copper, tin, bananas, lead, wool, and others of our products.

"It would be unreasonable to expect that in a short period the remuneration of Latin American workers or farmers could be brought to the level prevailing in more highly developed countries; but it is only strict justice that the prices of our commodities be maintained at reasonable levels by the establishment, if necessary, of floors and ceilings."

As an example of present disequilibrium, the Foreign Minister cited the case of his own country, which suffers a serious transport shortage but cannot buy the trucks it needs because its income from coffee is insufficient, while in the United States and some European countries automotive production has been cut back, with attendant unemployment, for lack of a market. He called for action to eliminate these anomalies and end "slave labor." He proposed speeded-up studies of an economic agreement so that something effective could be accomplished in this field at the Eleventh Inter-American Conference, to be held in Quito in 1960. He also recommended careful consideration of the European common market as a possible model for America and suggested a meeting of American Foreign Ministers to coordinate the views of the various countries for presentation in the United Nations.

WHAT WOULD YOUR TAX BILL BE?

People interested in investing or doing business in many countries around the world will find helpful information in the "World Tax Series" being published by Little, Brown and Company of Boston and Toronto. The volumes were prepared under the direction of William S. Barnes by Harvard Law School's International Program in Taxation, in cooperation with UN officials. Separate books on taxes in Brazil, Mexico, and the United Kingdom have already appeared, at prices ranging from ten to fifteen dollars. Australia, Colombia, and Sweden are scheduled for coverage this year, and many other volumes are to follow. Each gives a thorough description and analysis of income, property, business, and other taxes affecting national or foreign individuals and corporations.



BOOKS

FROM THE PAU BOOKSHELF

"THE TRUTH IS," complained Victoriano Lillo recently, "that at present we Chilean writers know very little about those in Honduras, El Salvador, or Panama, and their situation in regard to us must be the same." Hemisphere authors in the other language areas—Brazil, Haiti, and the United States—know even less about their Spanish-speaking colleagues, and vice versa. And finding out is no easy task: the literary encyclopedias of those Latin American countries that have any at all tend to be purely biographical, locally oriented, and thus of small value to information-seekers elsewhere, and the more comprehensive international reference works skimp on Latin American material. To fill the gap, the Letters Section of the Pan American Union is preparing a definitive *Diccionario de la Literatura Latinoamericana*, with the help of writers and scholars in all twenty countries (the United States has been omitted, since material on U.S. literature is readily available, but Puerto Rico will be included). A provisional edition of the first volume, on Bolivia, has just been issued.

The difficulties of compiling such a work, summarized in the introduction by Armando Correia Pacheco, Chief of the Letters Section, are responsible for the "provisional." It is hoped that users of the drafts on the various countries will help the Section to correct errors and omissions and that publication will prod more authors into sending data about themselves—only 616 responded to a questionnaire that was sent to more than two thousand writers throughout the Hemisphere. Again, the drafts will not contain certain material planned for

the final version: panoramas of each country's writing, studies of trends, articles on literary periodicals and societies.

Even so, the present volume can stand on its own as a useful guide to eighty Bolivian writers, living and dead, carefully chosen to be of international interest. For each there is a biographical sketch; a critical evaluation, considered by the editor to be the most important feature of the *Diccionario*; and two selective lists, one of works by the author and the other of works about him. The volume is rounded out with a bibliography on Bolivian literary history and criticism. (Spanish only. 121 p. Multilith, paper-bound. \$.50)

Another literary publication of interest is titled simply *Gabriela Mistral, 1889-1957*. The essays it contains were read at a memorial gathering held in the Pan American Union shortly after the death of the Nobel Prize-winning Chilean poetess. The first, by her compatriot Dr. Juan Marin, noted man of letters and Director of the PAU Department of Cultural Affairs, is an affectionate remembrance, with its various points illustrated by quotations from her poetry and prose. In the second, Professor Juan Uribe Echevarria of the University of Chile offers a short study of her life and work. Dr. Rafael Heliodoro Valle, formerly Honduran Ambassador to the United States and OAS and now at the University of Mexico, reminisces about his meetings with her—particularly in Mexico, a country she had loved ever since she first went there in 1922 at the invitation of José Vasconcelos to help reorganize the educational system. Her ardent Pan Americanism is cited by OAS Secretary General José A. Mora in the final essay. A concluding bibliography lists 506 works by or about Gabriela Mistral, almost all available in the Columbus Memorial Library of the PAU. (Spanish only. 90 p. Multilith, paper-bound. \$.25)

The Brazilian painter and landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx, the U.S. sculptor Alexander Calder, the Cuban painter Amelia Peláez, and the Mexican painter Rufino Tamayo have very little more in common than vast talent and prodigious vitality. Together, as in *Four Artists of the Americas*, they give an encouraging picture of the state of Western Hemisphere art. The book consists of four articles by José Gómez-Sicre, Chief of the Visual Arts Section, that originally appeared in *AMERICAS*. They afford both personal glimpses and stimulating criticism and are accompanied by many black-and-white photographs. At the end is a chronology and a bibliography for each artist. (English only. 119 p. Illus. Paper-bound. \$.75)

The revised and enlarged second edition of *Estado Actual de la Educación Secundaria en la América Latina* (Present State of Secondary Education in Latin America) brings up to date a comparative study so well received by educators that its first edition was exhausted soon after it appeared. The new volume was prepared by Pedro A. Cebollero and Bernice Matlowsky, respectively former Chief and specialist in the Secondary Education

Section. Chapters on nature and purposes, organization and administration, plans and programs, methods and techniques, the teaching corps, and the secondary school and the community are supplemented by fifteen tables. There is a bibliography. (Spanish only. 206 p. Multilith, paper-bound. \$1.00)

Also in the field of education, *Awards for Study in Latin America* contains a list of scholarships and fellowships available in many fields. The title should not be taken too literally, since some of the awards are also open to Latin Americans or others for study in the United States and elsewhere. (English only. 46 p. Multilith, paper-bound. \$.25)

The formally organized cooperative has come a long way since its principles were formulated by the earnest pioneers of Rochdale, but the law concerning it has mostly developed piecemeal. *Estudio Comparativo de la Legislación Cooperativa de América*, prepared by Fernando Chaves Núñez of the PAU Cooperatives Section and Jean Orizet of the International Labour Office, examines the various countries' legislation in this field from a viewpoint that takes into account historical antecedents and social ideals as well as strictly legal aspects. In an appendix, the authors make some general recommendations. (Spanish only. 102 p. Multilith, paper-bound. \$.50)

Four new publications of the Travel Division should prove a boon to this summer's tourists headed for points south. *Requirements for the Entry of United States Tourists into the Latin American Republics* tells in handy chart form just what documents are needed for each country, how much they cost, the length of stay allowed, and the addresses of consulates from which visas or tourist cards can be obtained. Three up-to-date additions to the *Directory of Hotels* series cover Mexico, the east coast of South America (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela), and the west coast of South America (Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, and Peru). They list addresses, number of rooms, and rates in the local currencies. (English only. Multilith, paper-bound. \$.10 each)

Western Hemisphere statistics have progressed so much since 1941 that a new edition of the old one-volume *Statistical Activities of the American Nations* would be unconscionably bulky. Therefore, the new edition—really a new version altogether—is being published in separate pamphlets for each country. They are prepared by leading statistical officials of the country concerned—in the case of Canada, the subject of the most recent volume, by Herbert Marshall, Dominion Director of Statistics. Previously published volumes deal with Honduras, Colombia, Nicaragua, and Brazil. The main text is in Spanish, with an English summary appended. (Multilith, paper-bound. \$.25 each)

This, of course, is only a partial list. The complete catalogue of PAU publications (a new one will be ready shortly) is available on request from the Publications Division, Pan American Union, Washington 6, D.C. In

addition, the OAS specialized agencies, such as the Inter-American Housing Center in Bogotá, issue many publications of their own; information on them can be obtained by writing to the specific organizations.—B. W.

ART IN FEATHERS

THOUGH FEATHERWORK has always been the Brazilian Indians' most notable contribution to art, it has been considered merely "exotic" until now, and little has been written about it. As a step toward correcting this oversight, a husband-and-wife team of ethnologists has recently turned out a little book—handsomely printed and illustrated—on the work of this sort done by the Kaapor Indians of Maranhão State. Darcy Ribeiro, who organized and directs the Indian Museum in Rio de Janeiro (see *AMERICAS*, August 1955), spent some eight months among the Kaapor studying the significance of featherwork in tribal culture. Their ornaments, while not unique, are outstanding for their beauty and delicacy. The samples he gathered and those of the National Museum collection were analyzed by his wife Berta from the standpoint of artistry and craftsmanship (as part of a broader study undertaken for the National Museum that will include the work of several Brazilian tribes).

The Kaapor (or Urubú, as they are more commonly known) live on the eastern fringe of the Amazon jungle, an area that abounds in colorful birds. Since 1928, thanks to the efforts of the Brazilian Indian Protection Service, their relations with the white man have been peaceful. Relatively undisturbed by outsiders, they have kept intact their language and, for the most part, their culture, including their featherwork, in which they take great pride. Feather ornaments, sometimes worked into cotton cloth, are worn by the Kaapor from birth to grave. For the men, there are headdresses and lip decorations; for the women, forehead bands, belts, and slings for carrying babies; for both, bracelets, ankle bands, neck-



Feather headdress is worn by Urubú tribeswoman of Brazil. From *Arte Plumária dos Índios Kaapor*

laces, earrings, and unusual feathered combs. Some are for everyday use; others, more elaborate, for ceremonial wear. All are superb. Most are made by the men, who are trained in the craft from early childhood and patiently study the habits of forest birds in order to catch the most beautiful.

The details in the Ribeiros' book make for a fascinating—if decidedly specialized—account. The excellence of the printing, the photographs, and the drawings (by José Coelho, H. Fénelon, and Georgette Dumas) immeasurably enhances the book's charm. The most gratifying surprise—which should be joyously acclaimed by anthropologists—is the fourteen gouache plates by Miss Dumas, faithfully reproducing the various types of ornaments in all their rich coloring. The English summary at the end is a commendable feature, though it should have been revised by an editor born to the language.

Everyone who had a hand in putting out this book can be justifiably proud of his contribution. Unfortunately, it will not be easy to obtain, since this is a private edition of only two thousand copies. A condensed version, which includes the color plates, was printed for a pharmaceutical firm, the Silva Araujo-Roussel Laboratories, presumably for free distribution.—*B. S. M.*

ARTE PLUMÁRIA DOS ÍNDIOS KAAPOR, by Darcy and Berta C. Ribeiro. Rio de Janeiro, Offset-Gráfica Seikel, S. A., 1957. 154 p. Illus.

EXHIBIT A

CRITICS of the Puerto Rican success story claim it has a Cinderella quality and could not happen without the United States in the role of fairy godmother. This raises an interesting point, particularly at a time when so many countries appear eager to try on the glass slipper. Though the island has become Exhibit A for thousands of technical-assistance trainees, many from Latin America, they often insist that the wonders they see there hinge on attracting industry from the States, with a U.S. tariff-protected market as the major incentive. Just how much of the Puerto Rican economic-development program does depend on its ties with the mainland, and how much could be duplicated elsewhere?

At the request of the U.S. International Cooperation Administration, the National Planning Association—a non-political, non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening private enterprise—commissioned William H. Stead, an economic consultant, to find the answer. His penetrating, carefully documented report traces the evolution of the program through its trial-and-error stages, evaluates the achievements to date (without skipping over the problems for which no solution has yet been found), and concludes: "Much of the program, indeed most of it, is capable of being adapted to the needs of other developing countries."

He then balances off Puerto Rico's unique political and economic position against its economic disadvantages. As much a part of the U.S. market economy as any state, Puerto Rico has the advantage of free movement of goods, capital, and people between the island and the mainland. It enjoys the protection of U.S. tariffs and

custom barriers. There are certain intangibles, also—the assurance that U.S. investors are protected by a familiar legal, political, and economic set-up. Admittedly, Stead says, this reflects a provincial attitude that may change in time, but it is now a strong selling point in Puerto Rico's favor.

On the other side of the ledger are such problems as extreme population pressure, an almost total lack of natural resources, which elsewhere draw foreign capital like a magnet, and the corollary lack of local capital. "Among the great nations of the earth," the author says, "only Great Britain and Japan have successfully done what Puerto Rico is trying to do in a smaller way; that is, to build an economy on the processing of imported materials for re-export, with limited use of natural resources."

If an underdeveloped country makes no consistent effort to lure U.S. industry, as was true of Puerto Rico before 1940, nothing happens. In the competition for such investment, then, Mr. Stead concludes that the island has the edge only on those nations that lack natural resources in the same degree.

Nine aspects of the development program that are relevant for other areas are recapitulated in the final chapter. The author feels the biggest lesson lies in the major emphasis on the use of private capital, with government funds employed chiefly as a catalyst. Intensive, well-planned and well-managed promotion programs are indispensable to lure foreign capital (some countries sit back and wait for outside capital to come in, then complain bitterly when it does not). Tax exemptions and the provision of plants, land, and other facilities are powerful incentives. Supporting activities—roads, water and power, ports, airports, health facilities, and the like—must be furnished. Service programs, in which the host country helps to recruit qualified local people, are also an important part of the courtship. Another is the use of public corporations rather than government departments for greater administrative efficiency (the Puerto Rican Industrial Development Company, incidentally, follows the Chilean model). Strong central planning by people who know where they want to go and are willing to back up and start afresh when they make a mistake is essential. Finally, there is the need for able and honest government administration.

"One of the most engaging qualities of these men," the author remarks about the Puerto Rican leaders, "is that they are not fascinated by their past achievements." But much as he admires their ability, character, and energy, he recognizes that able leaders cannot always carry the support of the people. "Perhaps the basic secret of success in the program is that the Puerto Rican people have had the good sense to recognize the soundness of the programs proposed . . . and to keep their eyes on the 'main chance.'"

This useful handbook deserves wide circulation—and translation.—*K. W.*

FOMENTO—THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF PUERTO RICO, by William H. Stead. Washington, D.C., National Planning Association, 1958. 152 p. \$2.00

KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS' BEACHES?

Answers on page 44



1. Bristol Beach and Casino are part of Mar del Plata. Is this seaside resort—one of the most popular in South America—in Uruguay, British Guiana, or Argentina?

2. This beach is in a Cuban city whose harbor is identified with the naval history of Spain and the United States. Can you name the city?



3. Pradomar Beach Club is at Puerto ———, which was for many years Barranquilla's port on the Caribbean. Fill in the blank.

4. The Miramar Hotel at Macuto Beach, one of Venezuela's favorite resorts, is near the country's main gateway to the Caribbean. Name the port.



5. Historically rich Taboga Island, now a resort, is where Francisco Pizarro and Diego de Almagro planned the conquest of Peru. What country owns it?



6. Ancón Beach is in a South American nation that was once the center of the richest Spanish viceroyalty in the Americas. Is the country Bolivia, Peru, or Ecuador?



7. Situated near the country's colonial capital, Poneloya is one of Nicaragua's favorite bathing spots on the Pacific. Is it near Corinto, León, or Managua?

8. This Chilean beach bears the same name as a Colombian port city well known for its colonial fortifications. What is it?



9. This beach on Haiti's north coast is near a city where Napoleon's armies were defeated. Name the city.

10. Malvín Beach is a popular spot within the city limits of ———, capital of South America's smallest nation. Fill in the blank.



Letters

OLDEST UNIVERSITY?

Dear Sirs:

The second question of the April quiz, "Know Your Neighbors' Universities?", implies that the founding date of the oldest university in the Americas is 1551, which certainly corresponds to the opening of the University of San Marcos in Lima, Peru.... However, the calendar, which does not err, tells us that 1538 preceded 1551 by thirteen years. It was on October 28, 1538, that His Holiness Pope Paul III issued the Papal Bull creating the University of Santo Domingo, which is actually the oldest in the Americas.

V. Díaz Ordóñez
Ambassador of the Dominican
Republic to the OAS
Washington, D.C.

The Ambassador is right in stating that the University of Santo Domingo was created first. However, the University of San Marcos claims to be, as the question stated, the oldest "in continuous existence."

VENEZUELAN MUSIC

Dear Sirs:

... We continue to enjoy AMERICAS and since reading Betty Wilson's article "Adventure in Folk Music" [on the musicologists Isabel Aretz and Luis Felipe Ramón y Rivera, September 1956], we have eagerly watched for further word about the book tentatively titled *Music of the Americas* mentioned there. Also for the new recordings which the Westminster Company had in prospect. ... Can you give us further word on these two projects?

We do not have the Library of Congress records, but we do have the Columbia record with some of Juan Liscano's collection and find it so fascinating that we would like to secure more Venezuelan material both for listening and for dancing. ...

Mary and Jerry Brozik
Santa Barbara, California

Material is still being gathered for the book, which probably will appear next year. The Westminster recording project was dropped, but negotiations still continue off and on. You may be interested in a recent recording by the Orquesta Tipica Nacional of the Venezuelan Ministry of Education, which was founded and is conducted by Mr. Ramón y Rivera. The numbers are authentic and good for dancing as well as listening. The recording firm is Turpial, a Venezuelan concern, and the number TLP-5120.

ON ICE

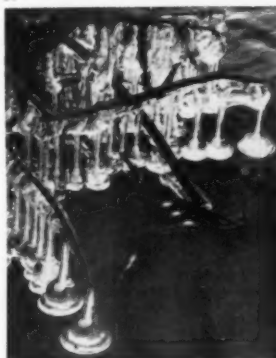
Dear Sirs:

Can you, or someone, tell me more about

the photograph on the inside back cover of AMERICAS for April 1958? I cannot understand how icicles of such flat-bottomed bell shape could be formed naturally.

F. Jeannette Henry
Pottstown, Pennsylvania

Scott Seegers, the photographer, explains as follows: "Some snow had fallen. Next day the sun came out. It melted the snow on the exposed roots of the ash trees overhanging the river, but the severe cold formed icicles of the water as it trickled down. The next day was even colder, and as the little waves at the river's edge lapped the bottoms of the icicles and fell away again they deposited successive tiny layers of water that froze promptly. This process built up the icicles from below, a reversal of the usual procedure."



QUIZ SLIP

Dear Sirs:

I have been a subscriber to AMERICAS since its first issue, and one of my favorite features is the "Quiz," ... from which I've learned a lot. Therefore, I was shocked when I discovered two errors in the "Quiz" on Guatemala in the February issue. First, Guatemala is the largest of the five Central American republics, not the second-largest. ... The editor must have included Mexico, which is not in Central America. ... Second, the Palace of the Captains-General in Antigua was never the residence of Pedro de Alvarado, who died in battle in Mexico in 1541 ... before Antigua was founded in 1543. The palace was completed in 1764. ...

Sarah Brown
Chicago, Illinois

Sorry about Alvarado. However, Nicaragua, with an estimated area of 57,150 square miles, is larger than Guatemala, with 48,290.

INFORMATION PLEASE

Dear Sirs:

I enjoy your coverage of present-day governments, culture, and progress in the republics of the Western Hemisphere, ... but I would greatly enjoy more articles about the early history of the South and Central American Republics and about the peoples of those times. ... Also, it seems to me that many readers would be interested in information about the various Latin American colleges and universities, since education began there on a formal basis before the founding of either Yale or Harvard. ...

Finally, I think that thousands of your

readers would like to see in AMERICAS a listing of general tourist information, including requirements for entry into the South and Central American countries; the relationship between the currencies of those nations and the U.S. and Canadian currencies; the most popular ways (steamship, airline, and highways) of entering and visiting the other nations of the Hemisphere. ...

Francis C. Gabriel
Indianapolis, Indiana

Some day, when space allows. Meanwhile, the PAU issues a number of pamphlets with the information you seek. A catalogue is available on request from the Publications Division.

Dear Sirs:

... We were interested to note your article on the OAS Council's new Fellowship Program beginning July 1. Why not at the same time devote some space in the magazine to employment opportunities in the executive field? ...

Midland Sales Associates
Auburndale, Massachusetts

MOURNING

Dear Sirs:

For some time I have been struck by the unusually somber appearance of the covers of your very fine magazine. The April issue is particularly striking in that respect. The back cover has the effect of a death notice. It seems to me that the first impression (which is always so important) made by the magazine ... would be greatly enhanced if very much lighter line drawings were used and if the magazine could possibly afford the expense of an occasional use of color or at least light-colored paper. ...

Paul D. Seghers
New York, New York

We're dreaming of a four-color Christmas.

SHOOTING IRONS

Dear Sirs:

... Some months ago I started work on a book titled "Small Arms of the Americas." My original intent was to provide illustrations and basic data on the small arms currently in official use by the twenty-one nations of the Organization of American States. Accordingly, I wrote to various Ministers of Defense and some manufacturers, requesting help in the form of photographs and instruction manuals. I received very little co-operation, and a question was raised concerning classified material. I am only trying to make available information of a non-classified military and commercial nature.

Information is readily available on most of the small arms made in the United States and most foreign countries, but information on small arms, commercial or military ... manufactured by our sister nations is almost non-existent. I would like to hear from any manufacturers of commercial or military small arms—pistols, rifles, shotguns, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns—and would greatly appreciate receiving photographs and basic data for such weapons, to include in my book. Proper credit will be given for all material.

Larry S. Sterett
Biggsville, Illinois

ACTING SPANISH

Dear Sirs:

Seeking new and fascinating ways to present the Spanish culture and language to my students, I am most interested in obtaining some simple one-act plays in Spanish for my first-year classes so that they might benefit from the language experience of acting out a play all in Spanish. . . . If you know of such plays or if any of your readers could provide the information, I would appreciate hearing about it.

Jane B. Nelson
2075 Princeton Street
Sarasota, Florida

Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., and The Century Company, both in New York City, and The John C. Winston Company of Philadelphia and Chicago have published several one-act plays in Spanish.

BRIDGING THE GAP

Dear Sirs:

. . . Besides giving away AMERICAS to friends in the United States and in foreign countries, . . . I send a subscription to a lady from the State of Washington who visits Mexico every year, and the Spanish edition to two families in Monterrey, Mexico. . . . I have been wondering if there is any Spanish-English publication for children; it would be marvelous to have the same common interests developed between the children of our families as your magazine has done between the adults. . . . AMERICAS is a great bridge for international good will. . . .

Priscilla Wigder Pitman
Sarasota, Florida

We don't know of any such publication; do our readers?

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ANSWERS TO QUIZ on page 42

1. Argentina. 2. Santiago. 3. Colombia. 4. La Guaira. 5. Panama. 6. Peru. 7. León. 8. Cartagena. 9. Cap-Haitien. 10. Montevideo, Uruguay.

MAIL BAG

The following correspondents seek pen pals throughout the Hemisphere. Readers requesting this service must apply individually, print their names and addresses, and be able to write in at least two of the OAS languages (English, Spanish, Portuguese, and French), shown below by initials; students should say whether they are of high-school (H) or college (C) level. Stamp collectors are indicated by an asterisk.

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The Organization of American States unites the twenty-one republics of the Western Hemisphere for the common purpose of maintaining peace, freedom, security, and welfare of all Americans. The member states are: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

The OAS had its inception in 1890 during the First International Conference of American States, which met in Washington. Today, it operates through a large number of different agencies and institutions throughout the Hemisphere, all contributing to the common objective of preserving the peace and security of the member states and promoting, by cooperative action, their economic, social, and cultural development.

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